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Introducing America



THE PAPER AND BINDING OF
THIS BOOK CONFORM TO THE
AUTHORIZED ECONOMY STANDARDS

Foreword

THERE is evidence of a growing realization that in this country we are, in general, very ill-informed about the United States of America. It is an overdue and welcome awakening of the conscience. We have too long neglected a body of masterly discussion of political problems germane to our own and a body of economic experience the study of which would be particularly useful to us; and we find ourselves embarrassed in our present urgent need of Anglo-American co-operation by an ignorance that leads us into many errors of judgment. Anyone who will take the trouble to glance at *A Select Bibliography of the History of the United States* by Professor Allan Nevins, recently published by the Historical Association, will see how much there is in that one field of American studies alone with which we ought to be familiar, and about which we know nothing. Yet a realization of these shortcomings does not always lead to the wisest action. It makes some people into fanatics; and they clamour for the imposition upon all young persons of the compulsory study of American history, carelessly assuming, in their zeal, that schoolchildren and undergraduates have vacant minds and unmolested hours which need only to be filled with their own nostrum, in order that the ills of the world may be mended. But these young persons are, in fact, already all too often badly over-driven; the zealots for America forget their fellow zealots with other wares to push; and none of these partisans has any notion of what a disorderly thing education would become if it allowed itself to be driven hither and thither by the rise and fall of their various cries. It is important, therefore, that some attention should be given both to the practice and to the counsel of those who have devoted themselves to education as a profession.

Few greater disservices could be done to education than to add to the burden of factual information that our schoolchildren are expected to acquire. There would be no surer way of securing that the prizes went to the wrong candidates or of producing a generation of prigs without either wisdom or judgment. Our

task is to lighten the already greatly over-weighted curriculum, not to add things to it. And the sheer impracticability of providing that all children shall learn about all the topics that from various points of view are regarded as essential to the making of the good citizen, should in itself be sufficient to suggest that something has somewhere gone wrong with the argument. Moreover, no university teacher, who has counted the cost, will ask that students should be sent up to the university well-informed, by the mere process of efficient teaching, about the principal events of American history; and no serious student of American affairs supposes that the smattering, which is all that even a man who is fairly well read in American historical literature can muster, will be of much avail to him in forming his political judgments. It is obvious that we have to go some other way about the reform of the commonwealth than to substitute compulsory American history for compulsory Latin. It is doubly obvious when it is remembered that, long before the victim upon whom we propose to operate has become a responsible citizen, the call is likely to be for a judgment, not about the United States, but about Russia, or China, or some other even more neglected topic.

This is not to say, however, that we should go back to the three R's and the classics, or that we should add to the elementary curriculum nothing but science, modern languages and economics. If stocking-up with useful information is not satisfactory schooling, neither should schooldays be merely a time for practice in the handling of tools that are only to be put to real uses afterwards. Satisfactory schooling is an enlargement and enrichment of experience under the guidance of persons who devote themselves to the organized achievement of that purpose, and are skilled in the art and science of teaching.

The two teachers who have written the following pages seek to effect one of these enlargements by "introducing America"—a country in which they themselves have travelled widely. When that first and vital step has been taken, then will the time have come to see to it that the felt need is met.

H. HALE BELLOT

AMERICA AND BEYOND

IMPORTANT EVENTS

IN AMERICA

OUTSIDE AMERICA

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1607. Founding of Virginia by Capt. John Smith. | James I, King in England. |
| 1620. Pilgrim Fathers land in New England. | |
| 1775. War of American Independence (to 1783). | 1760-1820. George III, King in Britain. |
| 1776. Declaration of Independence (4th July). | |
| 1787. Making of the Constitution of U.S.A. | |
| 1789. George Washington, First President (to 1797). | 1789. Outbreak of French Revolution. |
| 1803. Louisiana Territory bought from Napoleon. | |
| 1812. British-American War (to 1815). | 1815. Battle of Waterloo. |
| 1823. Monroe Doctrine proclaimed. | 1833. Slavery abolished in the British Empire. |
| 1846. Final settlement of boundary between U.S.A. and Canada. | 1846. Sir Robert Peel brings about repeal of the Corn Laws in Britain. |
| 1861. Abraham Lincoln, President (assassinated 1865). | 1862. Bismarck becomes Minister-President in Prussia. |
| 1861. American Civil War (to 1865). | |
| 1863. Lincoln proclaims the Abolition of Slavery. | |
| 1869. First railroad across the American Continent completed. | 1869. Opening of Suez Canal built by Ferdinand de Lesseps. |
| 1898. Spanish-American War (April-August). | |
| 1901. Theodore Roosevelt, President (to 1909). | 1899. Outbreak of the Boer War. |
| 1903. Henry Ford's first factory. | 1901. Marconi sends first wireless message across the Atlantic. |
| 1913. Woodrow Wilson, President (to 1921). | |
| 1914. Opening of Panama Canal (August). | 1914. Outbreak of World War I (August). |
| 1917. America enters World War I. | |
| 1920. America declines to join the League of Nations. | 1920. League of Nations starts work at Geneva. |
| 1929. Beginning of the Depression in America. | |
| 1933. Franklin D. Roosevelt, President (Second Term 1937, Third Term 1941). | 1933. Hitler becomes Fuehrer in Germany. |
| 1941. America enters World War II. | 1939. Outbreak of World War II. |

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INTRODUCING AMERICA

CHAPTER I AMERICA IS NEWS

G. K. CHESTERTON once said, "Columbus was not the first to discover America; it had often been discovered before, but always hushed up." To-day, in spite of Columbus, most people in this country still know very little about that part of the world. In schools we study the history of the American Colonies and the American War of Independence, but when America leaves the British Empire it leaves our history books as well.

If the history books have hushed up America, the films have done quite the opposite, and people in Britain to-day get their idea of America from Hollywood. The films have indeed made us familiar with some of the everyday things in American life. We know the shrieking siren of the police-car and the fire engine and the tolling bell of the railway engine. We know how the American people talk and dress, and we can picture street scenes in their cities.

Yet it is a very exaggerated picture of American life that we get from the films. Gangsters and shooting are not so frequent as they suggest. We once asked a friend who was taking us round Chicago about this, and his reply was, "Well, I've been around this burg since '92 and I've seen no shooting." He did not mean that there had not been any shooting in Chicago, but that ordinary people like himself seldom came across it.

Then the films often suggest that quite ordinary people live in houses which have enormous rooms with expensive furniture; and typists and shopgirls—if they happen to be heroines in the story—dress in a way which would very soon ruin them in real life. Only rarely do we see pictures of typical homely scenes. There is not so much glamour in everyday life as the films suggest. In fact, in many parts of America life is more uneventful than it is in the most isolated parts of our own country. In the scattered townships of the West, people may have to go sixty or even one hundred miles to the nearest cinema.

There is a story about a traveller who had several hours to wait at one of those small western towns. He asked the baggage agent at the station whether there was anything on in the town. He found there was no cinema, no pool room (a kind of billiard saloon), and apparently no form of amusement at all. So he asked what the people did in their spare time. "Well," replied the baggage agent, "lately everybody has been going along to Charley's Store to see his new bacon slicer." This contrast between the hustle of the city and the slow monotonous life of the small town is but one of the many contrasts in American life. One has to be very careful about describing anything in America as "typical": so much depends on the part of the country you are talking about.

Until the Second World War, the newspapers joined in this hushing-up of America. They gave the impression that America was a country where ordinary people were always doing extraordinary things. If a man tried to push a peanut over the Rockies with his nose, or if people got married in an aeroplane, they reported it. But they did not give enough news for us to get any idea of what went on regularly from day to day in America.

All this has changed. America is news. The papers now give much better reports of what goes on in America, and the radio gives much more time to America in its programmes both for adults and for schools. We have come to

realize that the British and American people must "get together" if they want to preserve the ideal of freedom which they hold in common. We are going to work closely together and we want to get to know each other better.

It is the aim of this book to give a close-up of America to-day; and to understand America to-day we have to delve back into the past. This is not an ordinary history of America telling the story of America through the years since the War of Independence. All that is important in American history, both before and since that war, has in some way or other influenced the present. So in each chapter we go back into the past and draw from it those things which help us to understand America to-day. We hope the reader will find this introduction to America interesting enough to make him or her want to find out much more about America's history. At the end of the book there is given a list of books which will help in doing this.

CHAPTER 2

THE LAND

COLONIAL AMERICA

TO-DAY the United States of America are over three million square miles in area, thirty times as large as the British Isles. They stretch from the Atlantic Ocean to the Pacific Ocean, and from the Canadian border to the Mexican border. They have a population of 130 millions drawn from every country in the world. They are one of the world's richest countries in raw materials and lead the world in industrial production. Yet in 1607, less than three and a half centuries ago, the only white people in the country were a tiny band of settlers just arrived from England. They were the founders of Virginia, led by Captain John Smith, and in their little settlement on the banks of the James River they had a hard struggle for existence against Red Indians, famine, and disease. This is how John Smith describes some of their early difficulties:

There were never Englishmen left in a country in such misery as we were in this new discovered Virginia; we watched every third night lying on the cold bare ground, what weather so ever came and all next day. . . . Our food was but a small can of barley, sodden in water, to five men a day; our drink, cold water taken out of the river . . . very stale and at low tide full of filth and slime which was the destruction of many of our men.

However, thanks to John Smith's leadership, in the end the Colony took root, and in time prospered.

In 1620, thirteen years after the founding of Virginia, a small band of Puritans, the Pilgrim Fathers, landed on the rocky, woody shores a thousand miles to the North and laid the foundation of another set of colonies—those of New England.

In the next hundred years other Colonies were founded along the coast. The Colonies were not all English. Henry Hudson, an Englishman exploring on behalf of the Dutch, in 1609 discovered the river that bears his name. This is how one writer describes what followed:

Scanning the shore from their mast, the Dutch topmen noticed red men, the colour of the soil, crouching among the rocks, a few circular huts, smoke rising from a hole in the middle. Before long the natives are venturing to swim round the European vessel and others are pushing off bark canoes. They are nude, with fish bones stuck in their noses and loin-coverings of badger-skins. They make it understood that they inhabit an island called Manhattan. Landing, the Dutchmen approach the Chief where he sits before his bark hut, exchange the message of peace with him, Wampum (strings of beads), and forthwith the women with their flat shining bands of hair, come back from their hiding place and start pounding the maize again; the elders resume their weaving, the men are felling trees with their stone axes. . . .

The Palefaces, under their safeguard, offer a few pipes, a bottle of "fire water." The aged chief, the sachem, dons his feather mantle and proffers return gifts of tobacco and skins, fox, badger and bear.

[*New York*, by Paul Morand (Heinemann)]

The river mouth in which this Island of Manhattan lay made a fine natural harbour. Soon Dutch settlers as well as traders began to arrive, and by 1626 Peter Minuit, a Dutch Governor, offered to buy the island from the Red Indians. To-day there stands on Manhattan one of the world's richest cities—New York. In 1626 it was sold by the Indians for about £5 worth of glass beads and given the Dutch name of New Amsterdam. Then a wooden fence, or wall, was built across the island to keep out the wolves and bears. To-day the wall has gone but its name remains in Wall Street, the home of the New York Stock Exchange and the centre of America's commercial life. In 1664 New Amsterdam was captured for the English by James, Duke of York (later King James II of England). It was renamed New York in his honour.

By the eighteenth century, thirteen colonies had been set up by white men along North America's coast between the

Appalachian Mountains and the sea. Georgia, named after the British King, George II, was the last of these. It was founded in 1733, by General Oglethorpe. At that time in England, the prisons were overflowing with debtors, for the law then said that men who could not pay their debts must go to prison until they did! Oglethorpe's idea was to empty the prisons by sending some of the debtors to help colonize Georgia; few of these debtors were criminals, and many of them made good colonists.

The thirteen colonies differed greatly in life and custom and manner of founding—New England with its hardy Puritan farmers, Pennsylvania with its Quakers, New York with its French and Dutch traders, Virginia with its rich tobacco and cotton planters, and Georgia with some of its people descended from ex-prisoners. Yet in 1775 they all made common cause against a common enemy. They revolted against King George III of Britain, who they felt had been treating them tyrannically and taxing them unfairly. They drew up a Declaration of Independence in 1776; and after eight years of war, Britain was forced to grant them their freedom.

Thus the former American Colonies became the United States of America, the U.S.A. On the map their western boundary was the Mississippi River, but nearly all their four million inhabitants still lived between the Appalachian Mountains and the Atlantic Ocean. Few had, as yet, dared to settle beyond the Mountains, and those who had were ever in danger of attack from the Redskins, who now hated the Palefaces whom they saw gradually taking the land over which they had roamed at will.

HOW THE UNITED STATES GREW IN AREA

From the end of the War of Independence till the end of the nineteenth century, "U.S.A." never had the same meaning for two succeeding generations: new territories were constantly being added by conquest, purchase, or agreement. The frontier was ever moving westward. The

growth of the country can be seen from the maps on pages 8 and 9.



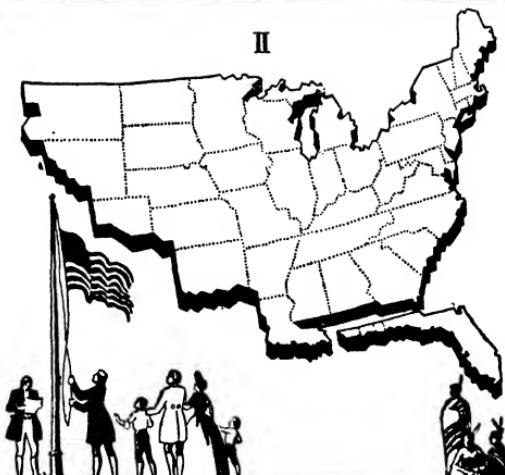
In 1803 the area of the country was doubled by the purchase from Napoleon of the Louisiana territory (Map I), a huge area west of the Mississippi. Napoleon had obtained it from Spain at a time when he had visions of world empire. But Britain and her Allies kept him too busy in Europe,

I



PURCHASE OF LOUISIANA

II



RECOGNITION OF FLORIDA

From Headline Booklet "America Contradicts Herself"

and he had to give up this dream. Thomas Jefferson, the American President, arranged the purchase of the whole area for three million pounds.

III



SETTLING OF THE NORTHWEST

IV



CONFLICT WITH MEXICO

By courtesy of American Foreign Policy Association, New York

Florida, in the extreme south of the country (Map II), was still part of the Spanish empire. After some fighting, Spain was forced to sell this area to the United States in 1819.

The south-western part of U.S.A., from the Gulf of

Mexico to the Pacific Ocean (Map IV), was won from Mexico between 1845 and 1848.

Meanwhile, in 1846, by agreement with Britain the United States obtained the Oregon territory in the north-west (Map III). This completed the settlement of the boundary between Canada and the United States, from the Atlantic to the Pacific. There are no fortifications along this three thousand mile frontier. Yet it is the safest frontier in the world. How so? Because instead of a double line of forts, one British, one American, both Britain and U.S.A. have agreed to trust each other. Both countries have real security because they know that they can settle any difficulties by friendly discussion. They need no show of force because they have no thought of using force.

By the middle of the nineteenth century, U.S.A. had reached the boundaries which it has to-day. Much of it, however, was as yet uninhabited by white men. How people came to settle in this vast country will be described in our next chapter.

IMPORTANCE OF THE SIZE OF THE COUNTRY.

The United States of America are considerably larger than the whole of Europe—in fact, all Europe would fit into America east of the Rockies. From New York to Kansas City is less than half-way across America, yet this is about the same distance as from London to Istanbul. Lake Michigan is more like an inland sea than a mere lake. Its narrowest part takes five hours to cross by steamer, and one is out of sight of land for two and a half hours. If you were going from Southampton to Los Angeles you would be barely half-way there when you reached New York. The journey across the country by the fastest train takes at least two days and three nights.

Most Americans to-day travel by road, and the English visitor is generally surprised by the great distances which Americans will travel in a day: 400 or 500 miles is by no means unusual. But their roads are straighter and their

cars more powerful than ours, so for long stretches of the journey it is possible to keep up an average speed of sixty miles per hour.

Climate Varies. Very few things are the same all over America, and one that varies most is climate. In Britain we only have slight variations in climate between one part and another at any given time. But in America, especially in winter, it is possible to go from one extreme of climate to another. One day you could be enjoying winter sports in Michigan with temperatures far below freezing-point; then you could get into an aeroplane and travel south overnight to Florida and spend the next day bathing and basking in sun warmer than we get at the height of summer. When icy January winds are sweeping through the streets of New York, you can go into a restaurant and eat fresh-picked strawberries that have just come from the southern part of the country! These are brought to New York by rail in great refrigerator-cars which make it possible to enjoy summer fruits and flowers all the year round.

Thus within the one country you can get differences of climate greater than those between Norway and Southern Italy.

Climate affects character. People who live in warm countries all the year round are generally more easy-going and comfort-loving than those who endure invigorating cold winters. Thus even if the people in America were all of one race, the climate would cause them to differ in temperament. But as we shall see in our next chapter, the American nation is made up of many races.

Outlook Varies. In a country as large as America the way you think about the outside world depends very much on the part of the country in which you live. Americans who live in the East are only half as far from Europe as those on the Pacific Coast. Many of them therefore have been able to visit Europe. They followed what was happening in Europe more closely; and they felt more than the people

who live farther away than what happens in Europe also vitally concerns America. On the other hand, events in China, Japan, and the East Indies have seemed very far away to those people in the east of America.

It is just the other way round for Americans who live in California or in the other States on the Pacific Coast. Europe to them is very far away. They look out across the Pacific. They have felt that what happened in China, Japan, and the East Indies closely concerned them.

Of course, most of the States face neither ocean. A great part of America is like a huge saucer, between the Rocky Mountains in the west and the Appalachian Mountains in the east. The people who live in this central part of America are not only in the middle of a great country, they are in



December in Florida (Seabathing: Miami Beach)

By courtesy of Cunard White Star, Ltd.

the middle of a great Continent —of the New World. Need they bother about the Old World? Naturally, many of these people thought they need not. It is very far away and America is so big that the country can produce nearly everything that its people need. Imagine that our Island of Britain was lifted like a magic carpet, wafted across the Atlantic, and dropped in the heart of America.

Would not our way of looking on things change? Might we not be tempted to say, "Thank goodness, we are four thousand miles away from Europe instead of just twenty miles: Europe's troubles need not bother us any more"?

The Regions. America is so large that there are distinct regions which in some ways are like separate countries. In these different regions the people have different occupations and ways of living. For example, the cotton States of the South are very different from the manufacturing States of the North. As we shall see in Chapter 5, the South did once try to become a separate country. To-day one of the



December in Michigan (Iceboating and Tobogganing)

most important regions of the country is the Middle West, which is roughly the area enclosed by the Great Lakes and the Mississippi and Ohio Rivers (see Frontispiece). This is to-day the industrial heart of America. More about the various regions will be found in the chapter on American farming (Chapter 6). The chief regions are marked on the Frontispiece map.

CHAPTER 3

THE PEOPLE

PIONEERS

THE people who founded America were tough. If they had not been, they would not have risked the perils of sailing across the Atlantic, let alone the hardships which would face them when they arrived.

The modern Atlantic liner is anything from 10,000 to 80,000 tons, it is driven by steam, runs to time, and makes the crossing in a week or less. Throughout the journey, thanks to modern refrigerators, you can have fresh fruit, vegetables, and milk. But the founders of America had to face a journey of at least seven weeks, more likely nine or ten weeks; and it might be longer still if they ran into storms. Their ships were rarely more than 300 tons; you could put one of them into the lounge of the modern liner the *Queen Mary*. A traveller on such a ship wrote in 1750:

That most of the people got sick is not surprising because in addition to all other trials and hardships, warm food is served only three times a week, rations being very poor and very small. These meals can scarcely be eaten on account of being so unclean. The water which is served out on ships is often very black, thick and full of worms so that one cannot drink it without loathing even with the greatest thirst. Oh, surely one would often give much money on board for a piece of good bread or a drink of good water if only it may be had. I myself experienced that sufficiently, I am sorry to say. Towards the end, we were compelled to eat the ship's biscuits which had been spoiled long ago, for in a whole biscuit there was scarcely a piece the size of a dollar that had not been full of red worms and spiders' nests. Great hunger and thirst forced us to eat and drink everything, but many do so at the risk of their lives. . . .

[Quoted by Leo Huberman in *We, the People* (Gollancz).]

It needed courage to face such hardships—the courage of the Pilgrim Fathers, who had left their homes and sailed

to America rather than give up worshipping God in the way they believed to be right; the courage of the adventurers like Captain John Smith and his companions, who asked nothing better than a life of adventure and hardship; the courage of the poor, determined to rise out of their poverty. Poor people who could not afford the passage to America sold themselves as *indentured servants* in the hope of a better time in the future. These indentured servants were at the mercy of the Captain of the ship in which they sailed; for when they reached port he sold them to the Planters in order to obtain their passage money. They would be bound to work for the Planters for several years. When the time was up, they were free to get some land of their own and begin the new life for which they had left home so long ago.

Thus the people who founded the American Colonies and the early settlers must have had courage to set out at all. They needed energy and skill as well as courage, to overcome the difficulties which faced them on their arrival. There was always the danger of attack from Indians. There was also the danger of starvation, especially if the settlers arrived too late in the year to grow crops to help them through the winter. To-day in America, one Thursday in November is kept as "Thanksgiving Day," and people eat turkey and cranberry jelly. This is to remind Americans of the Pilgrim Fathers, who landed in New England in November, 1620, and who would have starved but for the wild turkeys and the cranberries, which they found in the woods. Even so, half that little band had died before the cruel winter was through, for cold and hunger brought disease.

Yet New England and the Colonies to the south took root. In time cities were built and the thirteen Colonies became prosperous. The independent spirit of the early settlers flourished, and it was their descendants who won the War of Independence against the mother country, Britain, and founded the United States of America in 1789.

The Pioneers who opened up the lands of the west beyond

the Appalachian Mountains also needed to be tough. Every spring in the early years of the nineteenth century saw families setting out on the perilous adventure. In 1770 there were only about 5,000 white people living beyond the mountains, but by 1840 there were 8,000,000.

The hardest part of the journey was through the mountain ranges, which were three hundred miles wide. Beyond the mountains there were no roads; some people followed the Indian trails through the forest, but more sought out the rivers, especially the Ohio and its tributaries. There a man and his family might be lucky enough to buy a boat or raft, but more often they cut down trees in the forest and built their own raft. When they reached a place which took their fancy, they often broke up their raft and used the pieces to build their new home. Little time could be spent on this, as they had to secure the land and sow their corn or there would be no food for the coming winter. So many a family spent the first winter in a "half-faced" camp. This was a shack with three sides and a roof; the fourth side, away from the wind, was open to the weather. In the following year they might build a more comfortable log cabin, and later perhaps a two-storey house. By this time, however, for many of the Pioneers, life would be getting too civilized. Neighbours would have settled all round them and the urge to move on again to new land would grow too strong to be resisted; so they would sell out to someone newly arrived from the East. These were the true Pioneers, the people who were ever in the forefront of the westward march. According to an old American story, one man moved so often that even his animals got used to it: every year in the Spring, his chickens would come to him with their legs crossed ready to be tied for their regular journey West!

The new land to which the Pioneers went was owned by the Government. It was sold in lots of 160 acres for two dollars (eight shillings) an acre, later reduced to one and a quarter dollars; and after 1862 no charge was made. In order

to get enough money to buy his land, his tools, and his seed, the farmer often borrowed from the bankers in the East. If he could not earn enough to pay the interest on his loan, his farm would become the property of the Bank. The farmers felt that the bankers drove a hard bargain, and as a class they came to dislike and to be suspicious of the commercial East—a feeling which still exists to-day.

Next came the problem: how were the farmers to get their produce to the distant eastern markets? There were as yet no railways and few roads, but down through the heart of the country there flowed the great Mississippi River. Soon there were hundreds of boats plying up and down the river, taking the farm produce down to the port of New Orleans and bringing back clothes, tools, and other things needed by the farmers.

Another way for getting farm produce to the East was opened in 1825 when the Erie Canal was cut. This meant that there was a continuous waterway from the Great Lakes to the Hudson River and down the Hudson to New York. Thus both New Orleans and New York owe much of their greatness as ports to the pioneer farmers who opened up the West.

THE OREGON TRAIL

By 1840 the frontier had reached a point west of the Mississippi, where the nature of the country changed. The forests and tall grass now gave way to the Prairies, with no trees and only short tough grass, and a very low rainfall. This seemed like desert to those who had tilled the rich lands farther east; but the westward advance did not stop, it made a jump. Trappers, hunters, and traders brought back tales of rich lands right away beyond the Rocky Mountains, on the Pacific Coast. Oregon, in the far North-West, was now the lure to the restless Pioneers. To get there was even more hazardous than the journeys of the earlier Pioneers. The Plains Indians were far more dangerous than those who had gradually been driven

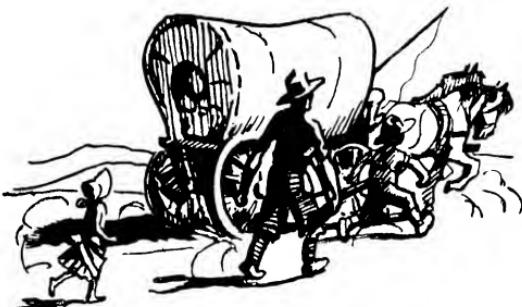
from their villages and farms in the eastern half of the country. Here on the Prairies they lived by hunting the buffalo. The films do not exaggerate their skill in horsemanship; they were swift and deadly marksmen. Many could shoot so quickly that they could keep eight arrows in the air at once. The White Man carried no weapon to match theirs until the Colt six-shooter was invented in 1836.

No wonder the Pioneers of the Oregon and other Western Trails sought safety in numbers. The party would contain scores or even hundreds of wagons; they would be many weeks on the trail, and all the time, day and night, scouts had to keep a ceaseless watch against ambush.

Even so the Redskins sometimes managed to stampede the animals in the night, or, more often if they were strong enough, made an open attack on the camp. Yet they could not stop the western march of the Palefaces. The Indians were gradually killed off or rounded up and made to settle in special areas called Indian Reservations—tracts of land that the American Government reserved for their especial use.

Another call to the west came when gold was discovered in California. In 1849, "Forty-niners," like Clementine's father in the song, came in a rush to California by land and sea, lured by the hope of dazzling fortunes. Gold and silver were later discovered in some of the mountain states, such as Montana, Nevada, and Idaho.

So the West gradually filled up. The Cow Country of the south-west gave us the picturesque cowboys, and in the



The Covered Wagon

1860's, when farm land was less plentiful in the East, farmers began to cultivate the great plains (see Chapter 6).

The pioneering days are over. The free lands were all taken by the end of the nineteenth century, but the pioneering spirit has left its stamp on the American character. We can still find the old restlessness; there are still people who cannot settle in one place for long, but sooner or later get the urge to move on again. On 1st October, "Moving Day," thousands of families throughout America move house just for the sake of a change.



Life was much more free and easy in the West, with little distinction between the classes; back in the older states there were all kinds of conventions. The wealthy merchants and rich planters and other people of high rank lived lives quite different from those of the small farmers and shop-keepers. Even in the Colonial days you had to be of a certain rank before you could use the title "Mr." or your lady wore silk; but among the Pioneers life was too hard and simple for such distinctions to find place. Their leaders were the men who were most successful with the axe or quickest with the gun. You still find this difference between the East and the West to-day. There is a much stronger spirit of equality in the West than there is in the East.

THE IMMIGRANTS

The people who opened up the West were not all settlers from the eastern states of America. Some had come from

across the seas, especially from Scotland, Ireland, Germany, and the Scandinavian countries. Wisconsin, for example, was largely settled by Germans, and Minnesota by Scandinavians. America became the "Land of Promise" to the poor and the oppressed. When life became too hard in Europe, there was always the chance to begin again in the New World. There was a constant stream from over-crowded Ireland, especially after the potato famine in 1846. Many Germans came after the failure of revolutions in Germany in 1848. Poles and Jews escaped from the persecution of the Russian Czars. Sicilian peasants sought the New World when their vineyards were ruined by disease.

In the first half of the nineteenth century most of the immigrants were from the north-European countries, from races akin to those already in America, but in the second half a change took place. America was passing through an industrial revolution. Workers were needed for the factories and mines and to build the new railways. Agents travelled all over Europe painting glowing pictures of life in America and urging people to go there.

The greatest number now came from east and south-eastern Europe, where the standard of living was low, and the people might therefore be expected to work in America for low wages. These new immigrants went to the growing cities of America, not to the farms. They often settled in large colonies in the cities; and as they lived together with others of their own race, they became "Americanized" much more slowly. They still talked their native language, had their own newspapers, and kept their former national habits.

They came in ever increasing numbers. At the beginning of the present century immigrants were coming in at the rate of a million a year. Ten million, equal to the whole population of Canada, entered America in the ten years between 1903 and 1913. This meant that they were entering the country at the average rate of one hundred an hour, day and night.

After World War I America began to be alarmed. They had always expected that the newcomers would soon lose their national habits and that Germans, Poles, Irish, Italians, etc., would quickly become Americans. That had happened in the earlier years, but then the immigrants had been much less numerous, they had settled on farms all over the country and had easily been absorbed; but it was found that the new immigrants were not so easily absorbed now that they lived together in towns, and they belonged to races much less like the Americans than the earlier immigrants from Northern Europe. So it was decided to reduce the number of people allowed into the country. In 1927 the maximum was set at 150,000 a year.

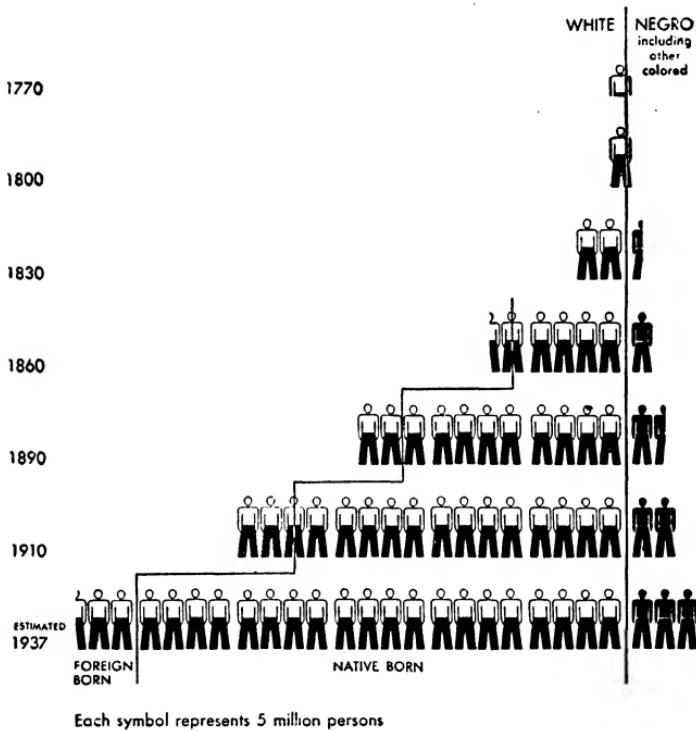
When the Depression hit America two years later, throwing millions out of work, immigration practically ceased. It was no good going to America then, for work was as hard to find there as it was at home. Immigration started again after 1933, with Jews and others fleeing from Hitler's persecution; but there is a limit now to the number who may go. One of the tragedies of recent years has been that there was no longer a country in the world to which people could flee from misery and oppression; for the new countries of the British Empire had closed their doors in the same way that America had.

THE PEOPLE TO-DAY

It will be a long time before anything like a common American race grows out of the mixture of races which lives in the country to-day. No one is considered a true American unless his mother and father were born in America. By this reckoning, 31 per cent, or more than three out of every ten, are of foreign birth. Many of the immigrants have never got beyond the city at which they entered the country. Thus New York has the most mixed population of any in the world. Here are some figures: Out of a population of seven and a half million in the city of New York, only one and a half million have American-born parents.

To-day there are more Italians in New York than there are in Naples, more Irish than there are in Dublin, more Germans than in Dresden, and more English than in Brighton. This mixture of peoples is one of America's

GROWTH OF POPULATION



Pictorial Statistics

greatest problems to-day. Like the size of the country, it makes a common outlook impossible.

THE AMERICANS AT HOME

Thus it is clear that it would be a mistake to think of the American people as all being of the same race as

ourselves. On a visit to America, one finds many things which are very different from life in our country. It has been said that America is a woman's country and England is a man's country. In England most of the money is owned and therefore spent by men. In America when a man dies he leaves more of his money to his daughters than to his sons—the sons are expected to make their own way in the world. To-day more than half the money in America is owned by women, therefore the manufacturers make the goods they think women will buy. For example, a man can get a ready-made suit to fit him more easily in England than in America. On the other hand, a woman can get a dress that fits her perfectly more easily in America than in England. In America the mother generally runs the family, the wages are all paid over to her and she keeps the accounts. This is partly due to the fact that American men, especially business men, have to travel much greater distances than in England; they are therefore more often away from home over-night or for days at a time. This also explains the great hotels that are to be found in all the big cities. You will see few women in them; they were built for salesmen and others whose business takes them travelling about the country.

Another thing that shows you that American manufacturers cater specially for women is the kitchen of any American home. It has all kinds of labour-saving devices and gadgets that few English kitchens possess. Most American kitchens have either a refrigerator or an ice-box, and the man who leaves the coal in winter leaves the ice in summer. The kitchens have many electrical devices and in many you can even find an electric egg whisk.

The American home in winter would probably strike you as much too hot. All homes except those of the poorest workers are centrally heated so that the temperature of the whole house is kept the same, generally about 75° F. or higher. In England few of us can boast of central heating; we keep our living-rooms at about 63° F. in winter. No

wonder 75° or more strikes the English visitors as hot! But in England we only have an average summer temperature in the 60's, while in America it is in the 70's or 80's; so in each case, we like to keep our houses heated in winter to about the same temperature as we are used to in the summer.

After being so often asked to close the door in England, you would be surprised to find that there are no doors to the living-rooms in America, but instead one room opens into another. This is only possible in centrally heated houses, where there are no cold draughts to be shut out.

One thing is sure to strike the English visitor. The Americans are some of the most hospitable people in the world. Thanks to modern transport, we shall in the future get many more opportunities to visit them. Friendly contacts of this kind will help to cement the friendship of our two countries, on which the peace of the world so much depends.

AMERICAN BOYS AND GIRLS AT SCHOOL

Country Schools. The American people have always been keen on education. Whenever a new township sprang up, one of the first things that its little group of citizens did was to build a school-house and hire a teacher. There are still over 130,000 of these one-teacher schools, mostly in the western part of the country, where families are few and far between. There used to be many more one-teacher schools, but to-day, whenever possible, several schools are grouped together in a fine new school building for several hundred pupils. Special school buses collect the boys and girls from as far as twenty-five miles away and take them home again when work is done. There are over 80,000 of these school buses in use every school day in America.

City Schools. In the cities the schools are generally larger than ours. There are many high schools (what we call secondary schools) that have several thousand pupils, sometimes as many as five or six thousand. The ordinary

elementary schools (which they generally call grade schools) often have as many as a thousand pupils.

School Life. American boys and girls generally start going to the elementary school at the age of six. Each year the average boy or girl goes up one class, or grade. Normally there are twelve grades, so schooling may go on to the age of seventeen or eighteen. In most States you cannot leave school until you are sixteen years old, and some are putting the leaving age up to eighteen. All the schools have boys and girls mixed.

The first eight grades are passed in the elementary school. When a boy or girl has passed the eighth grade, generally about the age of fourteen, he or she goes on to the *high school* for the last four grades. Some States now are making a different division of the twelve grades—six in the elementary school, three in Junior High, and three in Senior High. Many boys and girls never complete the High School course, but two-thirds of all the boys and girls in America between the ages of fourteen and seventeen are at school.

In the elementary school they learn the ordinary class subjects: e.g. reading, writing, arithmetic, English, history, geography. In the big high schools, however, there is a wide choice of subjects. They are like great department stores of education. Each year there are one or two subjects which must be taken, but the boys and girls can choose the rest for themselves. Your class-mates are those who first went to school in the same year as you did. But your class does not keep together for all lessons. Each pupil has his own time-table and goes his own way.

Having such big schools does give a boy or girl more choice of subjects, but it means that few ever come into contact with the Head, or Principal as they call him. Some schools are so big that it is impossible ever to have an assembly of the whole school.

We once went into the Principal's office in a large high school and he asked us if we would like to hear a lesson. We said we would like to hear a history lesson. Instead

of taking us along to a classroom, he looked at his time-table and then went to a panel covered with more than a hundred knobs and turned one knob. He had switched on to a classroom and we could hear the lesson through a loud-speaker. In this way he could listen to any class or talk to any class; or he could turn a special knob and talk to every class at once. He could also put on the gramophone or radio for any class or for every class at once. We should add that we only met this terrible machine at one school out of about sixty which we visited!

When a boy or girl has passed right through high school, he or she is said to have "graduated." Graduation ceremony is very important, almost like a confirmation service. It is called *Commencement*. It is called commencement because, although it is the end of school life, it marks the beginning of life as an adult in the world outside the school.

In American schools they generally consider it more important to turn out good American citizens than clever scholars. This is because there are so many boys and girls with foreign-born parents. It is thought that the most important thing to teach them is the American way of life, which may be very different from that in which their parents were brought up.

Note. The Negroes of America, who form a special problem, have a later chapter to themselves.

CHAPTER 4

THE CONSTITUTION

THE FLAG AND THE STATES

If you count up the stars and stripes on the American flag you will find there are thirteen stripes and forty-eight stars. The stripes stand for the Thirteen States that started the United States of America. Each of these thirteen also had a star, and, whenever a new State was made, another star was added to the flag.

The last time any stars were added to the flag was in 1912, when Arizona and New Mexico became States.

There are forty-eight States to-day. Yet there are forty-nine Governments, one for each State and one for the nation as a whole, which is called the Federal Government. It is called the Federal Government because the United States is a Federation of States. That means that they have agreed to act as a single State for some matters, keeping the right to rule themselves in all other matters.

If you lived in the city of New York to-day, you would be a citizen of New York State and also of the United States. As a citizen of the State you would help to elect a Governor and an Assembly, which meets at Albany (the capital of the State) and makes laws for the people of the State of New York, about education, public health, police and so on, and which raises taxes to pay for these services. As a citizen of the United States you would also help to elect a President and a Congress (Parliament), which meets at Washington (the capital of U.S.A.) and makes laws that concern the whole country, about such matters as international trade and foreign affairs. Franklin Roosevelt was once Governor of New York and so head of the State of New York. In 1933 he became President of the United States and so head

of the whole nation. This is all rather complicated and there is a set of rules that make it clear what the Federal Government may or may not do. This set of rules is called the Constitution.

HOW THE CONSTITUTION WAS MADE

The Thirteen Colonies that won the American War of Independence in 1783 were suspicious and jealous of each other. They had worked together to win the war, but when the war was won it was not at all certain that they would become a single nation. They were more like thirteen independent nations. For example, each State put taxes on the goods it imported from the other States just as it put taxes on goods imported from Europe.



However, many of the wisest men in the not-very-United-States thought that it would be best for all if they could become more united. So in the summer of 1787, leaders from twelve out of the thirteen States met at Philadelphia to work out a Constitution. They wanted one by which they could act together for matters that concerned them all and separately for matters that concerned the individual States.

The meetings went on for several months. George Washington was chosen as Chairman, because he was one of the very few men who were respected in all the States—and no wonder, for he had done more than anybody else to win the War of Independence.

George Washington. George Washington was a rich planter. His plantation was called Mount Vernon. He had many slaves, but in his Will he gave them all their freedom. In the years before the American War of Independence he had already made a name for himself as a soldier fighting for Britain against the Indians and the French. When the War of American Independence broke out, he quickly rose to be Commander-in-Chief of the Colonial Armies. His men almost worshipped him. While the Colonies were wrangling among themselves as to who should pay the soldiers, Washington kept the army together and paid many of the soldiers with his own money. When the war ended he was the best known and best loved man in America. And now when the States were wrangling again over the Constitution, Washington did more than anyone else to hold them together and get them to agree.

Here is an example of the kind of problem that had to be settled. Some States, like Virginia, New York, and Pennsylvania, were large in area and population; while others, like Delaware, New Jersey, and Connecticut were very small. How could they make a Parliament (they called it Congress) in which the small States would not be always over-ruled by the big States? The big States wanted each State to elect a number of representatives in proportion to its population. But the small States objected that this would mean that the big States would always be able to out-vote the small ones. The small States suggested that each should have an equal number of representatives in Congress, but the big States objected that this would give the small States as much power as themselves, which was not fair. Fortunately each side agreed to give way a little. Congress was to have two Houses, like our Parliament, which has a House of Commons and a House of Lords. One, the House of Representatives, was to be chosen in the way the big States suggested; that is, according to population. The other, the Senate, was to be chosen in the way

the small States wanted: that is, there were to be two Senators for each State whatever its size.

At last the Constitution was drawn up. Each State had to decide whether it would accept it and join the United States of America. Some of them only voted in favour of it by a very narrow margin, but in time all thirteen did agree.

Who was to be the first President? There was only one possible answer, George Washington. Washington would have liked to retire to Mount Vernon, but once again he was called out to guide his country through a very difficult period—the launching of a new nation. In 1789 (the year of the French Revolution) he became President for four years, and was re-elected for another four years; but after that he refused to take it on for a third term, because he thought it unwise for an elected President to serve for more than eight years, lest he should become like a King and stay on for life. No American President was elected for a third term until 1940, when Franklin D. Roosevelt was elected for the third time in succession.

Congress met at first in New York, but it was thought best not to have the capital in any one of the States lest the others should be jealous. So Maryland gave up an area about ten miles square, and there a new capital city was built; it was named after the national hero, Washington. The area round Washington is called the District of Columbia. That is why if you get a letter from Washington it bears the post mark “Washington, D.C.,” while other



George Washington

cities are followed by the name of the State, e.g. Boston, Mass. (for Massachusetts), or Atlanta, Ga. (for Georgia).



*Young America visits the Capitol at Washington, the
Home of Congress*

Pix Photo

HOW THE CONSTITUTION WORKS TO-DAY

The President. Each Leap Year, on the first Tuesday in November, the American people vote for a President who will hold office for four years from the following 20th

January (until 1937 it was 4th March). The day when he takes office—the President's Inauguration as it is called—is always an exciting day in Washington. Crowds line the long wide Pennsylvania Avenue, which leads from the White House, the home of the President, to the Capitol, the home of Congress. The new President drives from the White House to the Capitol; there, at the head of the steps and facing a huge crowd, he takes the oath, swearing to obey the Constitution. Then he makes a speech called his Inaugural Address.

For the next four years he is the head of the United States and has very great power. As America has no King, a President has to do many of the things the King would do in a monarchy. He receives important foreign visitors, unveils memorials, opens new buildings, and appoints ambassadors and judges; but he must not behave like a King—the people like to think of him as one of themselves. They do not like pomp and ceremony, but they do like the President to pitch the first ball to open the baseball season.

He is also what we in this country would call Prime Minister, the head of the Government. He appoints the heads of the great departments; for example, the Secretary of State, who is like our Foreign Secretary, the Secretary of the Treasury, who is like our Chancellor of the Exchequer, the Secretary of the Interior, who is like our Home Secretary. As in this country, the heads of the departments form the *Cabinet*. But the President's Cabinet is very different from the British one. One important difference is that his Cabinet ministers must *not* be members of Congress. In Britain, the Cabinet Ministers must be members of either the House of Lords or the House of Commons. In Britain, if the Cabinet disagrees with the Prime Minister, it may be the Prime Minister who has to resign and let a member of the Cabinet take his place. In America, the Cabinet is not nearly so strong, and it certainly cannot make the President resign. He is there for four years whether they like it or not.

The President is also Commander-in-Chief of all the Armed Forces of the United States. In 1940, when President Roosevelt wanted to give Britain some American destroyers in exchange for Air and Naval bases on British Islands near to America, he did so as Commander-in-Chief rather than as head of the Government. This saved having to get permission from Congress, which might have taken a long time.

Congress. Congress is made up of the Senate and the House of Representatives. As we have seen (page 31), there are two Senators for each of the forty-eight States, but the number of members a State has in the House of Representatives depends on its population. This has important results. If we take the two States with the biggest populations and sixteen States with small populations, it works out as shown on p. 35.

More people live in the Atlantic States of New York and Pennsylvania than in those sixteen Western States. In the House of Representatives this results in the two States having more representatives than the sixteen States. But in the Senate, four Senators represent the two big States; while the smaller number of people in the other sixteen States have thirty-two Senators. As there are only ninety-six Senators in the whole country, this means that one-third of the Senate represents a part of the country which is large in area but which contains fewer people than the States of New York and Pennsylvania.

This may sound unfair at first, but it will be remembered that the Constitution was purposely made like this to safeguard the interests of the States with small populations. *States* are represented in the Senate, and *People* in the House of Representatives. It is important to realize this if we are to understand American Foreign Policy. The majority of *people* may favour a certain policy, but that policy will not have the support of the Senate unless the majority of the States favour it. In other words, the ninety-one thousand

people in the State of Nevada have as much power in the Senate as the twelve million people in the State of New York. Now the sixteen small States given in our list below are those in the heart of America, far away from either ocean. They have the least contact with the outside world, and it has therefore been hard for them to see any need for closer contacts; some of them have felt that these would only lead to their country getting mixed up in the quarrels of other countries. The President has always had to bear this in mind when deciding on his policy. The "Isolationists" in those Western States were not likely to want treaties made with foreign countries. They wanted America to keep free from outside ties. Yet if the President wants to make a

<i>States with Large Populations</i>		
	<i>Senators</i>	<i>Representatives</i>
New York . . .	2	45
Pennsylvania . . .	2	34
Total . . .	<u>4</u>	<u>79</u>

<i>States with Small Populations</i>		
	<i>Senators</i>	<i>Representatives</i>
Iowa	2	9
Kansas	2	7
Minnesota	2	9
Nebraska	2	5
North Dakota	2	2
Oklahoma	2	9
South Dakota	2	2
Wisconsin	2	10
Arizona	2	1
Colorado	2	4
Idaho	2	2
Montana	2	2
Nevada	2	1
New Mexico	2	1
Utah	2	2
Wyoming	2	1
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	<u>32</u>	<u>67</u>

treaty with another country, the Constitution says he must have the support of two-thirds of the members of the Senate. That means that the Senators of seventeen States, however small their population, could prevent the President from making a treaty.

Senators hold office for six years, but they are not all elected at the same time. There are elections for one-third of the Senate every two years. This means that the Senate changes much more slowly than the House of Representatives, whose members are elected all at once for a period of two years. It is much more an honour to be a Senator than to be a member of the House of Representatives. Senators represent whole States, but Representatives, or Congressmen, represent only their own districts. Unlike British M.P.'s, Congressmen have to be residents in the districts that they represent. This often means that they have only a local outlook and do not think very much in terms of the nation as a whole.

The Supreme Court. The Supreme Court has a Chief Justice and eight other Judges. Its members are appointed for life by the President. One of the most important tasks of the Supreme Court is to decide, if an Act of Congress is challenged, whether it is *Constitutional* or not. When President Roosevelt started his "New Deal" in 1933 he got Congress to make laws controlling Industry and Agriculture. His opponents claimed that the Constitution did not give Congress the power to pass these laws. So the Supreme Court had to decide whether Congress had the power or not, and in several cases decided that it had not. No Court in Britain has power to overrule a law passed by Parliament; but Britain has only one Parliament, not forty-nine. In America the Constitution divides power between the States and the Federal Government. Therefore there has to be a referee to make sure that one does not use powers that belong to the other and that both obey the Constitution. This referee is the Supreme Court.

Amending the Constitution. It is very difficult to alter the Constitution. First, two-thirds of each House of Congress have to vote in favour of the suggested alteration, or *Amendment*, as it is called. Then the State Assemblies vote on it, and if three-quarters of the forty-eight States are in favour the Amendment is passed. But if over one-quarter (it may be only thirteen) vote against it, it is defeated.

Several hundred amendments to the Constitution have been proposed in just over 150 years, but only twenty-two have been passed (two of them are mentioned on page 45). Ten amendments were passed in a block just after the Constitution was made, and therefore are generally considered as part of the original Constitution. So it has really been altered only twelve times in over 150 years.

The Americans are very proud of their Constitution and are generally against having any change made in it. It has stood the test of time. The Constitution and the Flag are symbols of the unity of the American people, in the same way as the Throne is the symbol of unity of the British Commonwealth of Nations.

CHAPTER 5

THE NEGROES

SLAVERY

FOR SALE, horses, mules, cattle, hogs, sheep and several likely young Negroes.

Such an advertisement was often to be seen in newspapers in the Southern States in the first half of the last century.

In 1619 a Dutch sea captain landed a shipload of African Negroes on the coast of Virginia. The Planters bought them to work on the tobacco plantations, and thus slavery started in America. It was not ended until a terrible Civil War had been fought between the States that wanted it abolished and the States that wanted it kept.

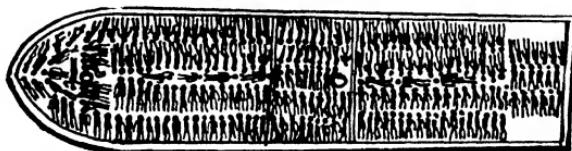
The slaves were brought from Africa and their journey across the sea was far more terrible than anything that had to be faced by the early Colonists. They were brought in specially built ships, with decks only about three feet apart. Between these decks the slaves were packed like sardines in a tin. Here is an extract from the account of a voyage on a Slave-ship:

She had taken in on the coast of Africa 336 males and 226 females, making in all 562, and had been out seventeen days, during which she had thrown overboard 55. The slaves were all enclosed under grated hatchways between-decks. The place was so low that they sat between each other's legs, and sat so close together that there was no possibility of their lying down or at all changing their position by night or day. . . . Over the hatchway sat a ferocious looking fellow with a scourge of many twisted thongs in his hand who was the slave-driver of the ship, and when he heard the slightest noise below, he shook it over them and seemed eager to exercise it. . . .

[Quoted by Leo Huberman in *We, the People* (Gollancz).]

In 1808 Congress passed an Act making the slave trade illegal. No more slaves could then be imported from Africa. But the Negroes already in America were still slaves and could be sold like cattle in the markets, as can be seen from the advertisement at the beginning of this chapter.

Negroes were not so useful in the Northern States, where the climate was colder and smaller farms took the place of



Plan of the Lower Deck of a Slave-ship

the great plantations of the South. It was therefore easier to end slavery in the North, and in the early years of the nineteenth century it was abolished by all the Northern States. In the South slavery was still looked on as a necessity; slaves were wanted to work in the rice fields and on the tobacco and cotton plantations.

About this time the new factories in England, France, and the Northern States of America were using more and more cotton. New inventions had made it possible to make cotton goods much more rapidly. Planters therefore increased the size of their plantations in order to grow more cotton; for they could sell as much as ever they could grow. In 1789 they were producing about two million pounds of cotton a year. By 1860 they were producing one thousand million pounds a year. To grow all this cotton, more negroes were needed.

Life on the Plantation. The centre of life on the plantation was the "big house" where the owner, or "Master," lived with his family. The family had many negro servants, or "house slaves." These slaves were often well treated and happy. Many of the white people of the South remembered with affection their negro nurses, such as the "coal-black

"Mammy" of the song. On the other hand, a severe master could make life terrible for his slaves.

The negro men and women who had to work in the fields of the cotton plantation lived in poor shacks well away from the big house and its beautiful lawns. These field hands worked all day, ploughing, tilling, planting, and cotton picking under the eyes of the overseer, who had a whip, which he did not hesitate to use if any of the slaves were lazy, for his wages depended on the amount of work they did. In return for their labour the slaves received food, shelter, and clothing, but nothing else unless their master were especially generous. Families could be split up and sold in the open market or left to someone else in a Will like any other property, and yet the *Declaration of Independence* made by the thirteen colonies in 1776 had said, "We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness." Negroes, however, were not looked upon as men and women: they were property; they had no rights.

SHALL THE SLAVES BE FREED?

In the early years of the nineteenth century, many white people in the British Empire as well as in America had a guilty feeling about slavery. Some were outspokenly saying it was wrong and ought to be abolished. In England William Wilberforce worked for forty years to get slavery abolished. This was done by Act of Parliament in 1833.

There was also a growing feeling against slavery in the Northern States of America, but there was one great difficulty in getting it abolished in that country. Congress could make laws only about certain matters that were handed over to it by the Constitution. Other matters, and these included slavery, were dealt with by the separate States. In order to get slavery abolished throughout America it would be necessary to change the Constitution;

and to do this, three-quarters of the States would have to favour it. As the slave States of the South made up half the total number of States, there was no hope of this as yet.

As the Pioneers pushed westward, more and more people followed to settle in the new territories. When there were enough people settled in a new area, this area became a new State in the Union—a new star on the flag. Slave owners in the South feared that in time there might be enough “free States” to bring about a change in the Constitution. Thus the admission of new States again and again caused trouble between the people in the North, who wanted them to be free States, and the people in the South, who wanted them to be open to slavery. There was trouble in 1820 when Maine and Missouri were admitted, in 1850 when California became a State, and in 1854 over Kansas and Nebraska. In order to keep the peace, one State was generally admitted with slavery at the same time as another was admitted without it; but by 1860 the limit of possible new slave States had been reached. None of the new land that remained to be divided up into States was fit for cotton growing, and slavery was therefore not likely to spread to these areas. Yet if all the rest of the new States were to be free States, the Abolitionists—those who wanted to do away with slavery altogether—might in time be able to make slavery illegal throughout America.

In 1850 there were about seven million Whites and four million slaves in the South. However, only about three hundred and fifty thousand Whites were slave owners; and of these, only eight thousand owned fifty or more slaves. But these eight thousand were the wealthy and powerful leaders in the South; they controlled the State Governments and made laws favourable to themselves; they represented the South in the Federal Government and Congress. As the opposition to slavery grew stronger in the North, the slave owners became determined to withdraw the Southern States from the Union rather than give up slavery.

In November, 1860, a new President was to be elected. The Republican Party, which had recently been formed and was opposed to more slavery, chose Abraham Lincoln as its representative. The South determined that, if he were elected, they would secede; that is to say, they would withdraw from the Union.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN AND THE CIVIL WAR

Abraham Lincoln was born in Kentucky in 1809. His father was poor and lazy. Although he was constantly moving from one place to another, he was not one of the hard-working Pioneers. He preferred occasional hunting to constantly tilling the soil. Abraham Lincoln's mother died when he was nine, when they were living in Indiana. Later his father married again and the family moved on into Illinois.

Abraham Lincoln had little schooling, but he read all the books he could find and was determined not to be a farmer. As a young man he once got a job taking a flat-boat down the Mississippi River to New Orleans. There, for the first time, he saw a slave market, and he is supposed to have said, "If ever I get a chance to hit that thing, I will hit it hard."

Later he became a lawyer and gradually made a name for himself in his State, Illinois. He took an active part in the politics of the State, and for a short time he was a member of the House of Representatives in Congress at Washington.

Lincoln was opposed to slavery and was very troubled because the slavery question was driving the North and South into opposite camps, which were ever growing more hostile to each other.

In 1858 Lincoln was the Republican Party's candidate in Illinois for the Senate. His rival was a much more famous man, Stephen A. Douglas, who was one of the greatest leaders of the Democratic party. The debates Lincoln had with Douglas made him well known all over the country.

but none of them proved much good. In fact, bad leadership in the early stages nearly lost the war for the North. Gradually, however, the strength of the North increased, while that of the South decreased. The battles were all fought over the territory of the South, huge areas of which were laid waste. One General said a crow would have to take his own rations with him if he wanted to fly across one area, as everything on which man or beast could live had been destroyed. Finally, in April, 1865, General Lee had to surrender with his army.

THE SLAVES ARE FREED

Slavery had caused the war, but the war was actually fought over the right of a group of States to withdraw from the Union. Lincoln once said, "If I could save the Union without freeing any slaves, I would do it; and if I could save it by freeing all the slaves, I would do it; and if I could save it by freeing some and leaving others alone, I would do it. What I do about slavery and the coloured races, I do because it helps to save the Union. . . ." Yet for most ordinary people it was a war about slavery; and slavery was abolished as a result of the War. Lincoln issued a proclamation declaring that from 1st January, 1863, all slaves in the States that were fighting against the Union would be freed. The proclamation could not be carried out until the War was won, but 1st January, 1863, the date of Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation, is a historic landmark none the less.

When the Civil War ended in April, 1865, Lincoln knew that the most difficult task still lay ahead. This was to end the bitterness caused by the War and to restore the Union without persecution of those who had been defeated. In a speech that he made on 4th March, 1865, when he became President for the second time, and when the end of the War was in sight, he said:

With malice toward none; with charity for all; with firmness in the right, as God gives us to see the right—let us strive on to finish

the work we are in; to bind up the nation's wounds; to care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow and his orphan; to do all which may achieve and cherish a just and lasting peace among ourselves, and with all nations.

Unfortunately it was not to be his lot to attempt this difficult task. Five days after the surrender of General Lee, Lincoln went to see a play at a theatre in Washington. Suddenly the audience was startled by a shot: Lincoln had been shot through the head by a man named John Wilkes Booth. The President died early next morning.

AFTER THE CIVIL WAR

Lincoln's death was a terrible tragedy for America. He knew that there was much anger and bitterness in the North against the South, and he alone might have been able to calm this down and bring the States together in friendly union once more. When he died, however, he was succeeded by the Vice-President, Andrew Johnson, who had none of Lincoln's power of leadership. The bitterest enemies of the South secured control and treated the beaten States like a conquered country.

In any case, life in the South was hard. Much of the country was laid waste, many people were ruined by the cost of the war, and the abolition of slavery brought many difficult problems. A new section (the Thirteenth Amendment) had been added to the Constitution, making slavery illegal. Another amendment (the Fifteenth) made it illegal to "deny the right of any citizen of the United States to vote on account of race, colour, or previous condition of servitude." In some States in the South the negroes made up half or even more of the population. The Whites therefore feared that if the Negroes had a vote they might be able to rule over them, so ways were found to get round the Constitution and keep the Negroes from voting. One way was to say that only those who paid a certain amount in taxes could vote. This is still the law in most of the States where there are large numbers of Negroes, and as the

Negroes are generally very poor, they do not pay enough in taxes to be allowed to vote.

THE NEGROES TO-DAY

To-day, the Negroes number over twelve million, which means that they are nearly one-tenth of the total population of the United States. Many now work in the factories of the North, but the great majority of them still live in the South and they are very poor. As you go south in a train from Washington, you can see the miserable little cabins in which they live; some of them look little better than hen-coops.

A great many of the Negroes are "share-croppers"; that means they till a little plot of the old plantation and share their crops with the owner, paying part of them to him as rent and selling the rest to try to get enough to live on until the next harvest. They have to buy their seed and tools and food at the land-owner's store, often at prices higher than they would pay in the ordinary shops. However carefully they may live, they are generally in debt before the next harvest comes round.

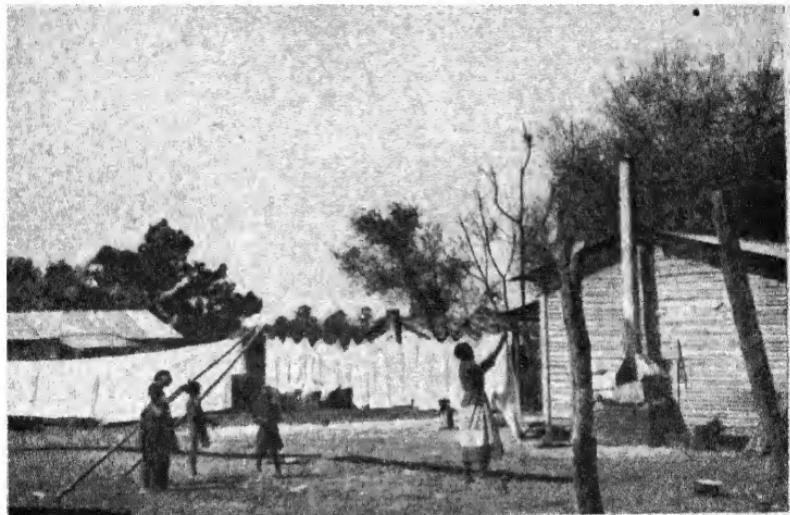
Those who are not "share-croppers" work as labourers in the cotton fields, but more and more jobs that they used to do by hand are now being done by machinery. A machine has even been invented for picking the cotton, one of the few tasks by which they could still earn a little money.

Many of the household servants, especially in the South, are Negroes. Most of the railway porters in America are Negroes; they are not called porters, but "Red-caps," because they always wear red caps so that they can easily be seen in a crowd at a station.

In the South they still make the Negroes keep apart from the Whites. They send them to separate schools, on which far less money is spent than on those to which white children go. Every station throughout the South has two waiting-rooms, one labelled "White" and the other "Coloured," and the Negroes have to travel in separate compartments

on the trains. The Negroes may not even go to the same churches as the Whites.

In the North they do not separate them in this way, but the Whites do not mix with the Negroes more than they have to. When the Negroes begin to move into a certain street, the Whites move out, so that most of the towns



Negroes on a Southern Plantation

Photo by V. de Palma

have their Negro Quarter. If you are going north along Fifth Avenue in New York, you notice when you come to about 125th Street nearly all the people on the pavements—or sidewalks as they are called there—are Negroes. The houses do not look any different from those any further down-town, but the Whites have moved out as the Negroes have moved in, and now this district, which is called Harlem, has a population of about 400,000 Negroes.

There are few marriages between Whites and Negroes; any White who marries a Negro is shunned by all his or her friends.

So the races do not mix, and the Negro problem remains one of the most difficult with which America has to deal. It is a hopeful sign that many people in America to-day do realize that there is a Negro problem. Indeed, President Roosevelt has said that the Negroes in the South are America's Problem No. 1. There are several societies that are working to improve the lot of the Negroes, and it is undoubtedly true that more is being done to help them to-day than ever before.

CHAPTER 6

AMERICAN FARMING

TYPES OF AMERICAN FARMING

THE picture map on page 51 shows all the chief types of farming that are carried on in America. In the eastern half there are three main belts—

- Dairy Farming in the North.
- The Corn Belt in the Centre.
- The Cotton Belt in the South.

Three other main kinds of farming shown in the East, mostly near the Atlantic coast, are tobacco, fruit, and market gardening. Americans call this last kind "truck farming." They call lorries trucks, and truck farming means growing vegetables and fruit that are daily carried by truck into the markets of the cities, which are very close together in this part of the country.

Between the Rockies and the Mississippi are the Mountain States and Great Plain States. Cattle ranching is the chief occupation of the Mountain States and along the Mexican border. Wheat is the chief crop on the Great Plains. Wheat farms and cattle ranches overlap a little where the two areas meet.

West of the Rockies fruit farming is the chief type. California in the West and Florida in the East have warm enough climates to grow citrus fruits, such as oranges, lemons, and grapefruit.

AMERICAN FARMS

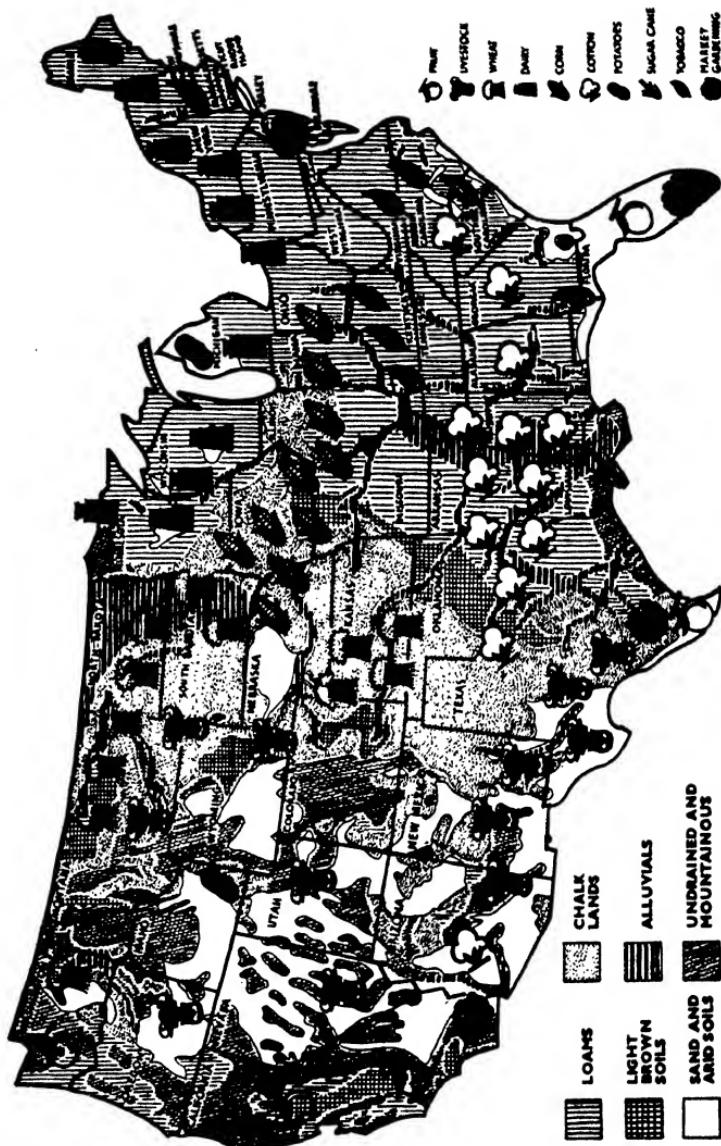
American farms are not all as large as some people imagine. There *are* some very large farms, especially where wheat is grown on the prairies, and some of the cattle

ranches cover one, two, or even three hundred thousand acres. At the other extreme there are thousands of "share-croppers" in the cotton belt of the South. These scratch a meagre living from as little as twenty acres, and as we have seen (Chapter 5) they have to share their scanty crop with their landlords. Most of the farms of America are between these two extremes. The Government used to sell land in lots of 160 acres, and this is about the average size.

There are just over six million farmers in America. The chart divides them into three groups: rich farmers, middle farmers, and poor farmers. It will be seen that the small number of rich farmers with big farms produce 40 per cent, or two-fifths, of the total produced by all the farms in America. But at the other end of the scale there are three million farmers—half the farmers of America—who together raise less than one-seventh of the total. Many of the farmers in this group are very poor indeed. Life for them is a constant struggle to keep themselves and their families out of debt or even from starvation. Numbers of them in the end have to give up the struggle and seek work as hired labourers; or leave the land altogether and go to the cities to try to find work in the factories. (See Chart, page 53.)

HOW THE LAND WAS WASTED

Much of the most fertile soil in America is to-day lying at the bottom of the Mississippi, Ohio, and other rivers. Instead of producing rich crops for farms where it used to lie, it has been washed away by floods into the rivers, thus raising their levels. As a result of this, in the Spring, when the melting snows pour down into the rivers, the level of the water in some places is higher than the surrounding land. Huge artificial banks, or "levees," have been built to prevent flooding. But sometimes the rivers break through and pour over the levees, and great areas are flooded. A great flood like this happened early in 1937, when parts of the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers burst their banks. Hundreds of people were drowned, thousands made homeless;



What America Grows
By courtesy of "Fortune" Magazine, New York, and Picturegraph Corp.

the damage done was enormous. The silting up of America's rivers in this way is a great problem, causing enormous sums to be spent on flood control. The tragedy of it is that it is the top soil, which is the most fertile, that has been swept away from what was once good farmland, leaving it barren waste.

In the nineteenth century land could be obtained for next to nothing. There was so much of it that few bothered to take care of it. Farmers would get all they could out of it for a few years and then move on to new land. If the same crop is grown on the same ground year after year, the crops become poorer. Rotation of crops and frequent manuring are necessary if the land is to yield good crops. In countries like Britain and Holland, where land is precious, these things are done; but in the nineteenth century in America, land did not seem precious. There was so much of it. It was cheap and therefore it was farmed wastefully.

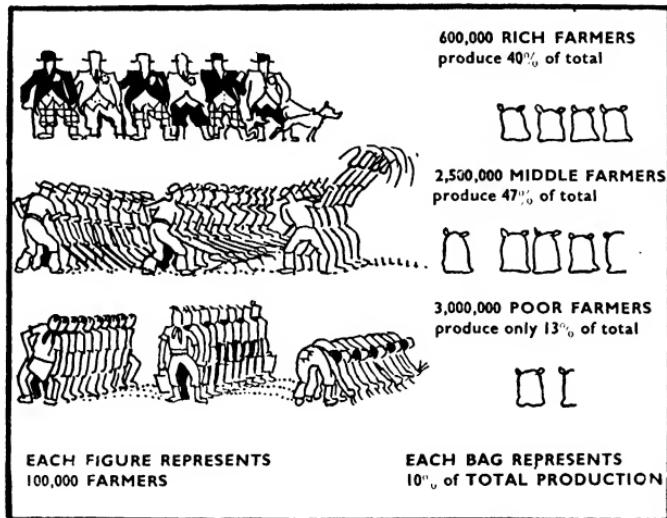
Carelessness and ignorance of proper methods ruined much of the land. For example, sloping land was ploughed up and down instead of across; thus when heavy rains came, the furrows made gullies down which the water poured, carrying the top soil away to the rivers. On the Plains of the West, it was the wind rather than the rain which did the damage. In order to plant wheat, farmers ploughed up the prairie grass, which held the soil together. Thus for many months in the year the soil was exposed. Rainfall in that region is slight. Top soil becomes fine dust. Then come fierce winds, which whip it away in great dust storms.

A fuller description of American agriculture will be found in geography books. We will just have a look at one problem region of to-day.

THE GREAT PLAINS

This area stretches roughly from the hundredth meridian of longitude to the foothills of the Rockies. We saw in

Chapter 3 how the Pioneers jumped this region and settled beyond the Rocky Mountains. Then just after the Civil War in the later 1860's, farmers started settling in the eastern part of the Great Plains region, and at the same time cattle raising was started on a big scale in the south-west, especially in Texas.



American Farming

The Age of the Cowboys. The "Cattle Kingdom," as it was called, was not at first fenced off into separate ranges. Instead, millions of cattle were kept on the open range. Each of the "cattle barons" had his own mark, which was branded with a red hot iron on his animals' hides.

The railways, which were gradually pushing westward, were just at this time reaching the edge of the Great Plains in the State of Kansas. Every year the cattle that were ready for the market were rounded up, taken on the long drive to the north to fatten on the longer grass there, and then taken to the cattle towns on the railway to be shipped east to the stockyards of Kansas City and Chicago. It was

this long drive that called forth all the skill of the cowboys. Tens of thousands of cattle would be driven perhaps six hundred miles.

Every Spring they rounded up the herds in designated areas, all the way from Texas to Wyoming and Dakota, identified their owners' cattle by the brands and branded the calves. . . . The breeding cattle were then set free for another year while likely three- and four-year olds were conducted on the long drive to the nearest cow-town on a railway. Each outfit of cowboys attended its owner's herd on the drive, protecting it from wolves and cattle rustlers, sending scouts ahead to locate water and the best grazing.

[*Growth of the American Republic*. Morison and Commager (O.U.P.).]



The great age of the cowboys lasted from 1866 to 1888. Then the open range disappeared. The ever-spreading railways were beginning to make a network over the country, cutting across the route of the "long drive": the farmers were pushing westward with the railways that gave them a means of getting their wheat to the markets in the east. Perhaps

the greatest of all the causes of the closing of the open range was the invention of barbed wire by J. F. Glidden in 1874. Nine years later his company was turning out six hundred miles of barbed wire a day. The result was that the cattle barons staked out claims in the name of their "outfits," fenced them with barbed wire, and so made enclosed ranches for themselves. The Cowboys no longer had the excitement and peril of the "long drive." Shut in by barbed wire they changed into cattlemen or ranch hands.

To-day the ranch land of the Great Plains is one of the problem areas in American agriculture. For years the land has been over-stocked, so that the grass has had no chance

to recover. Periods of drought have made conditions worse. Some States are now making laws to try to put matters right. They put a limit to the numbers of cattle which may be kept on any given area, and encourage range associations, by which a number of cattle owners combine over a wide area to make the best of the grazing and the scanty water supply.

The Dust Bowl. Farming on the Great Plains is in an even worse plight than grazing. Here is an extract about it from an American story—

A gentle wind followed the rain clouds. . . . A day went by and the wind increased, steady, unbroken by gusts. The dust from the roads fluffed up and spread out. . . . The wind grew stronger. . . . The dawn came, but no day. In the grey sky a red sun appeared, a dim red circle that gave a little light, like dusk. . . . Men and women huddled in their houses and they tied handkerchiefs over their noses when they went out, and wore goggles to protect their eyes. When the night came again it was black night, for the stars could not pierce the dust to get down. . . . the people stirred restlessly in their beds and wanted the morning. They knew it would take a long time for the dust to settle out of the air. In the morning the dust hung like fog, and the sun was as red as ripe new blood. All day the dust sifted down from the sky, and the next day it sifted down. . . . The people came out of their houses and smelled the hot stinging air and covered their noses from it. Men stood by their fences and looked at the ruined corn.

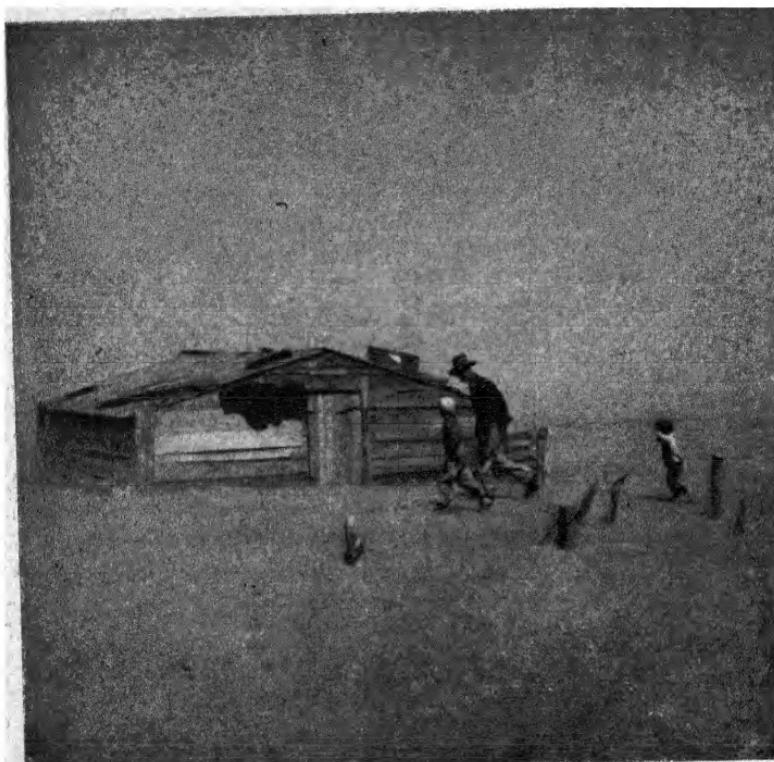
[*Grapes of Wrath*, Steinbeck (Heinemann).]

What were they to do? Almost every year now drought and these terrible dust storms came to blight their crops. It used not to be this way. What had gone wrong?

This land was first opened up for farming in the years following 1860—that is about the same time that the cattle-raising on a large scale started in the south-west. It seemed then that there was at least enough rainfall to make it possible to grow crops. How were they to know that this was not normal? So the farmers settled there to farm. Later came the years of drought—the worst in 1934 and 1936. Farmers ran deeply into debt. They mortgaged their farms to the banks to get money to

starvation. How were they to know that the coming years were to bring even less hope of recovery?

After the drought came the dust storms, like the one described above. They have given their name to the whole



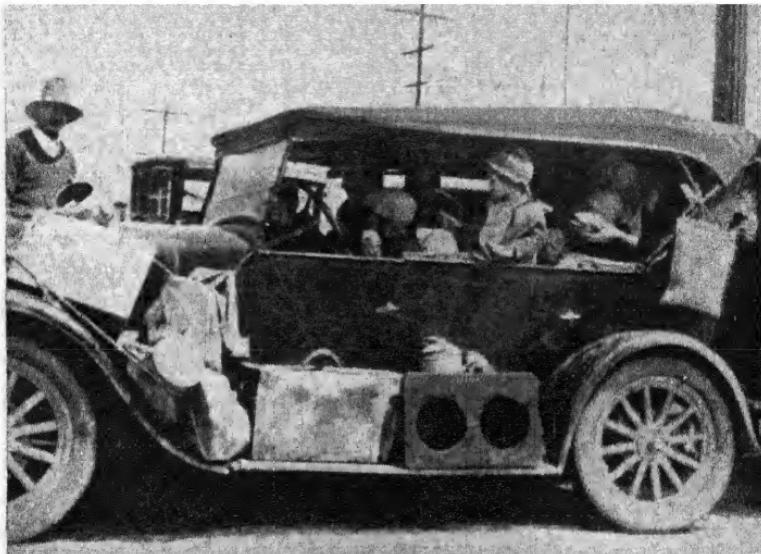
Running for Shelter from a Dust Storm in Oklahoma

By courtesy of Farm Security Administration, Washington. Photo by Rothstein

area—the “Dust Bowl.” The precious top soil was swept away, the crops were ruined. A recent survey has shown that no fewer than twenty-four thousand farms, covering fifteen million acres, are now no longer fit for cultivation. Their farmers have been ruined. Unable to pay their debts

o the banks, they were told they must clear out. They went. This is how Steinbeck describes it:—

Highway 66 is the main migrant road. 66—the long concrete path across the country, waving gently up and down on the map. . . . 66 is the path of a people in flight, refugees from dust and shrinking land, from the thunder of tractors and shrinking ownership, from the



Fleeing from the Dust Bowl

desert's slow northward invasion, from the twisting winds that howl up out of Texas, from the floods that bring no richness to the land and steal what little richness is there. From all of these the people are in flight. . . . Two hundred and fifty thousand people over the road. Fifty thousand old cars—wounded, steaming. . . . All day they rolled slowly along the road, and at night they stopped near water.

[*Grapes of Wrath*, Steinbeck (Heinemann).]

Where were they making for, these farmers of Oklahoma and other States in the Dust Bowl (the "Okies" as they came to be called)? What lay at the end of this Road 66 for those whose old cars and little stock of money managed to get

them there? CALIFORNIA, the land of sun and of peaches and of oranges. They had seen bright handbills telling of good wages for picking the fruit, of a chance to start a new life. They arrived only to find that scores of thousands had got there first. The wages offered were pitiful, not large as promised. But with so many pickers, so poor, so desperate, any little is better than nothing. Too many pickers, and still they come. . . . What shall be done with them? . . . Nobody quite knows yet.

For those who have remained behind, however, the Federal and State Governments are now doing a great deal. These farmers are taught how to bore deep into the earth for water. Some of them have been re-settled on new farms that are provided with water by irrigation: that is, by artificial channels that bring water from the mountain rivers and streams. All over the area demonstration farms have been laid out so that farmers can learn how to grow varied crops, including those that will hold the soil together and those that do not need much moisture. The U.S. Department of Agriculture has a special Soil Conservation Service, which is striving hard to save the land that has not yet been ruined and to restore the land that has. But it will be many years before the Great Plains recover. Much of the land will never be farmed again, because it should never have been ploughed up at all.

One thing is certain: the period of wasteful farming is over; the lesson has been learned. CONSERVATION—restoring and making the most of the land—that is the new watchword in American farming.

THE FARMERS' PLIGHT

The Dust Bowl is the hardest hit area to-day in American farming; but ever since 1919 the farmers all over the country have been in difficulties. In the South there are those "share-croppers" whose lot is little better than that of the "Okies" of the Dust Bowl. The share-croppers are being pushed off the land by the machines, especially the tractors.

The old plantations were broken up after the abolition of slavery and much of the land hired out to black or white share-croppers (see page 46). Now the use of tractors makes it possible to cultivate large areas cheaply with very little labour. So the land is being taken away from the share-croppers and farmed in large areas once more. Only a few of the share-croppers can find jobs as labourers on these new mechanized farms. Again the Soil Conservation Service comes to the aid of those small farmers who are holding on. They, too, are now being taught to make the most of their land. Formerly they grew little but cotton. If that failed or the price dropped, they had to pile up debts or starve. Now they are taught to keep part of the land for *subsistence* farming. That means they grow fresh vegetables and fruit and keep a few hogs, so that even if their cotton crop fails they can live on the food they grow.

The new great wheat areas of Canada, Australia, and Argentina have made it harder for the American farmers to sell their wheat. To protect her own industries America puts high tariffs on goods entering the country. Countries that, because of this, cannot sell their goods to America, will not buy wheat *from* America. Instead, they will buy it from those countries that are willing to take their manufactured goods in exchange. The coming of the modern tractor has meant a great fall in the number of horses used on the land, and therefore made it harder to find a market for hay. New fabrics like artificial silks have reduced the demand for cotton. These and other causes have made the last twenty years a bad time for the farmers. They can produce more than they can sell. To try to get enough money to pay their debts they grow still more. This means that the prices they get for their produce sink still lower, as there is already more than enough going to the markets.

One of Roosevelt's chief problems in the New Deal was to try to save the farmer. We shall see in Chapter 9 how he set about it.

CHAPTER 7

AMERICA'S MACHINE AGE

IRON AND STEEL

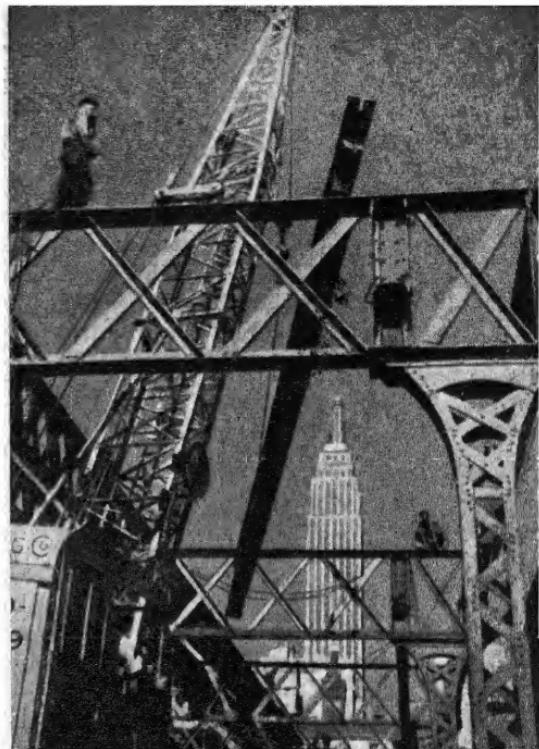
ALONG the western shore of Lake Superior there are many pleasant summer cottages. They belong to people who live in Detroit and other cities. It can be very hot and oppressive in these cities in the summer, and every week-end the roads are crowded with cars making for these pleasant lakeside homes, where one can bathe and bask in the sun until recalled to the city by work. It is just like being at the seaside except that there are no tides and the water does not taste salt if you get a mouthful of it.

If you were fortunate enough to spend a holiday there you would be bound to ask sooner or later, "What are all those ships on the horizon?" All day long there are ships coming down the lake low in the water, obviously with heavy cargoes; and ships going up the lake high out of the water, obviously with little cargo, if any. The answer to your question would be "Freighters." You would learn that they nearly all had the same cargo—iron ore. The ore comes from Minnesota and north-west Michigan. Most of it is loaded up at Duluth, on the western tip of Lake Superior. The ships pass from Lake Superior into Lake Huron, through the Sault Ste. Marie Canal. Americans do not like long names, especially foreign ones like that, so they always call it the "Soo Canal." It is one of the busiest canals in the world. A greater tonnage of shipping passes through it each year than through the Suez Canal. So much iron ore is carried on the Great Lakes that it requires more shipping than there was in the French merchant fleet before 1939.

Some of the freighters take iron ore down Lake Michigan

to the lake ports of Chicago and Milwaukee. Those that go down Lake Huron unload at Detroit or pass through into Lake Erie to Toledo, Cleveland, and Buffalo. To turn iron ore into steel, much coal is needed. Therefore the iron ore has to be brought to places where coal is near at hand. Coal is found not far from these lakeside ports, which have thus become centres of the steel industry and of the industries that use steel. Detroit, for example, is the home of the chief Ford works, and many other automobile factories. The greatest centre of the steel industry in America is Pittsburg, Pennsylvania, which is in the heart of one of the greatest coal mining areas and is also a convenient centre from which steel can be sent to the industrial centres of the north-east. So, much of the iron ore that comes down to the lake ports is sent on by rail to Pittsburg.

Steel has changed the face of America and the habits of the American people since the Civil War of the 1860's. It



Steel—A Symbol of the Modern Age

In the background is the Empire State Building, the tallest building in the world

Photo by Hattem

has been used in building a network of a quarter of a million miles of railroads covering the country. It is used in making locomotives and the steel coaches and wagons which carry people and goods all over this network. It has spanned the great rivers with bridges like the great George Washington Suspension Bridge over the Hudson at New York and the huge bridge across the wide Mississippi near New Orleans. It makes possible the tall sky-scrappers like the Empire State Building in New York, which is 1,250 ft. high and has 102 storeys. It goes into the making of millions of motor-cars—four-fifths of the world's total are made in America. From it are made the ships that ply on the Great Lakes of America and the oceans of the world. It makes derricks that raise the oil, and turbines that generate electricity, providing more power to drive more machines, again all made of steel. It is turned into machines for the farms as well as for the factories—ploughs, reapers, binders, and tractors. Think of anything we eat or wear or use, and you will almost always find that somewhere or other in its preparation steel is used. Steel has made this the age of the machine. America produces more machinery than any other country in the world, and no wonder; for when her factories are working at full blast, America can produce as much steel as all the other countries in the world put together.

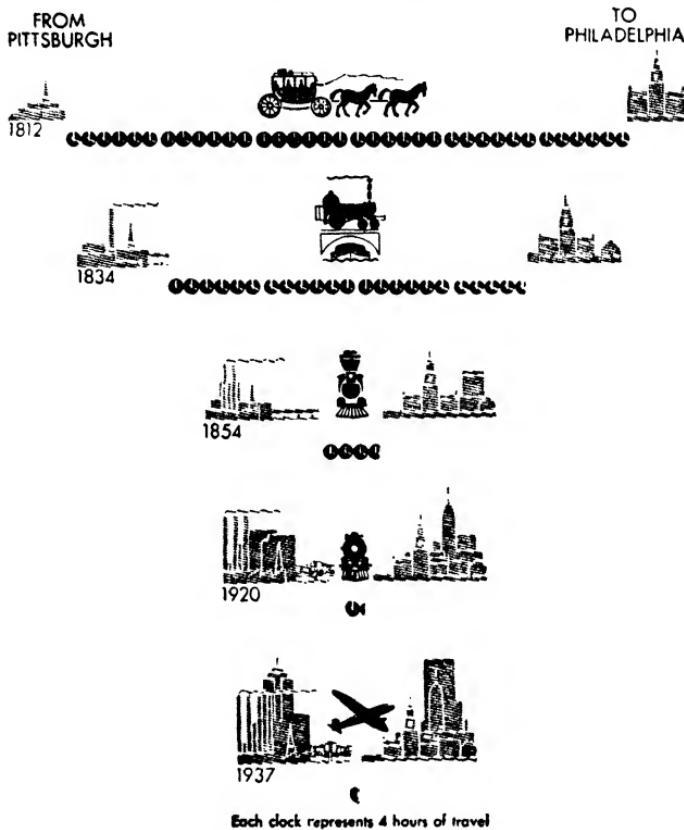
RAILROADS SPAN THE CONTINENT

Until the time of the Civil War in the 1860's, America was mainly an agricultural country. There were some important industries, especially in the East, but the greater part of the population still earned a living by tilling the soil. Changes, however, were coming. One of the most important was the spread of railroads. Railroads had to be built before there could be large factories; for they bring the raw materials to the factories and take away the finished articles both to the American buyers and to the ports for shipping overseas.

Just after the Civil War, railway building became almost

a craze in America, as it had been twenty years' earlier in Britain. There were already numerous railway lines in the eastern half of the country, but the farthest west you could

TRAVEL TIME



Pictorial Statistics

go by train was the Missouri River. Beyond this point the horse was the only means of getting to the Far West. Goods were carried by freight wagon and passengers by stagecoach. The fastest way of getting a letter across to the

cities of the Pacific coast was by Pony Express. Riders bearing the letters galloped as fast as swift ponies could carry them, changing to fresh ponies every ten or fifteen miles. Even so the journey took about ten days.

After the Civil War, business men saw that there was money to be made out of building railways in the western part of the country. It was more of a gamble than building railways in Britain had been; for in Britain railways were built to link up towns that already existed. In America the railways pushed out ahead of the towns. It was expected that once the railways were built, people would follow and settle on the land the railways opened up. The new railroad companies secured grants from Congress for a strip of land, sometimes ten miles wide, on each side of the proposed railway. By selling this land to settlers, they got some of the money needed to build the railway. They also obtained big loans from Congress. In building the railways, "the railway barons" certainly did something that was very useful for the public; but unfortunately many of them cared only about the money that was to be got out of it. They built up a great system of bribery so that they could get the States and even Congress to pass laws favourable to themselves.

The first railroad across the Continent was completed in 1869. The Central Pacific Company had started building from Sacramento, California, and the Union Pacific Company from Omaha, Nebraska. It was a race, for each company wanted to claim the greater share of the new railway. The Central Pacific imported thousands of Chinese coolies, while the Union Pacific used newly arrived Irish immigrants. The Central Pacific had the harder task, as it had to cross the wide mountain ranges. On one stretch of sixty miles, fifteen tunnels had to be made. At other places the railway had to be carried across ravines on great wooden trestles. Finally the two lines met at Promontory Point near Salt Lake City, Utah. There were great celebrations when two trains met, one from the East and one from the

West. Gold and silver spikes were driven in to connect up the two halves of the railway, which now linked up the Pacific and Atlantic Oceans. Before long, other railways were built right across to the Pacific coast, and a network of lines spread over the whole country. Many cities were connected by two or more different lines, and the railway companies kept cutting down rates for carrying goods and passengers between these cities in order to get traffic away from their rivals. They would make up what they lost on these low rates by charging very high rates between points where there was no competition. This was done farther west, and the farmers complained bitterly about the way the railways treated them. Gradually this competition forced many of the smaller railway companies to sell out to a few big ones. To-day the railways are controlled by many laws, which have been made by Congress in order to safeguard the public, and now old unfair practices are no longer possible.

“BIG BUSINESS”

The railways made it possible to build large factories and to build up great industries. Now raw materials and manufactured goods could be carried to and from the factories on a much greater scale. The needs of the railways also helped to expand industries. For example, much more steel was now wanted, and there was more need of engineering works to make locomotives and other equipment for the railways. Single factories were soon linked together in huge companies. Business men thought that the bigger the company the greater would be the profits. These “Captains of Industry,” as they were called, had already made many small railway companies into a few great ones. Now men like Carnegie and Rockefeller and Morgan built up huge Corporations or Trusts, which were like private empires spreading all over the country, controlling factories, railways, mines, and oilfields. In building up their empires these men were quite ruthless; smaller companies were

forced to sell out to the great Trusts or be ruined in trying to compete with them.

These great Trusts are controlled for good or ill by private individuals, yet they play a great part in the life of the nation. They employ millions of workers. They supply goods to millions of consumers. So much power in the hands of a few private individuals can be dangerous. Congress has passed many Acts seeking to limit this power in one way or another, but once more we have to remember that America is a Federation of States. For most matters companies come under State laws; and when Congress passes Acts to control them, the companies often appeal to the Supreme Court to say that these Acts are not constitutional. Very often the companies win. As we shall see (Chapter 9) President Roosevelt kept coming up against this difficulty in his New Deal.

MANY INVENTIONS

The American people have always been fond of experiment. Perhaps it is partly an outcome of the old Pioneering days, when every move West was an experiment. Anyhow, it helps to explain the great progress of American Industry. A new machine is taken up more quickly in America than in any other country in the world. Machinery that is not nearly worn out will be readily scrapped and replaced by something newer and better.

All the great companies keep staffs of inventors, who are always trying to invent new machines, new methods, and new materials. Between 1790 and 1860, 36,000 patents, or inventions, were registered at the U.S. Patents Office. This sounds quite a lot until you learn that in the first twenty-five years of the present century, the number rose to 969,428 inventions—nearly a million inventions in twenty-five years.

MASS PRODUCTION

One of the first things you see if you visit the Ford works at Detroit is a car park covering seventy acres. The park is

generally full of cars, but they are not new ones just made in the factory, nor are they all Fords. They are the cars in which the workers here come to the factory to make more cars. So many of the workers travel to work in their own cars that this car park is kept for them.



On the Ford Assembly Line
By courtesy of Ford Motor Company, Detroit

Henry Ford made his first car in 1893. In the first few years of the century he had a small factory. The number of cars he produced was also small, and they cost a lot of money. Ford argued that if cars could be produced in thousands instead of hundreds they could be made much more cheaply. Then the ordinary people would be able to afford to buy them. So he started *mass production*. Each part—and there are 4,000 to 5,000 parts in a motor car—is made in large numbers but with great accuracy; as much

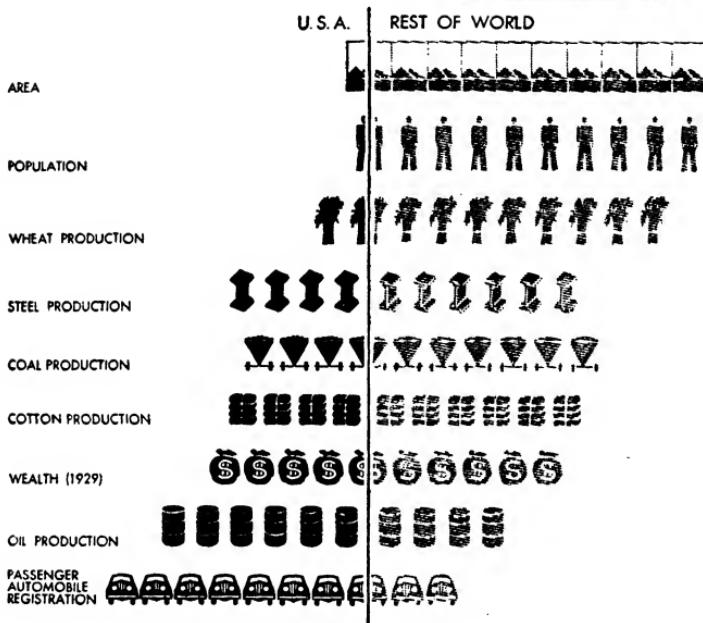
as possible of the work is done by machines and the chief job of the workers is to feed these machines and to assemble, or put together, the parts that the machines have made.

Let us have a look round the Ford factory at Detroit. The Ford plant covers nearly two square miles. It is claimed to be the largest industrial plant in the world. It has one and a third miles of quays, and Ford's own ships bring the iron ore down the Lakes from Minnesota. In one part of the factory you can see this ore being turned into steel. It is possible for ore to be unloaded from the ships at 8 o'clock on Monday morning and to go out as part of a Ford car at noon on Tuesday. In the machine shop you can see lathes and other machines turning out the various parts of a car which are made of steel. These parts are hitched on to a moving cable called a *conveyor belt* and carried to an *assembly line*, where they are put together with other parts brought by other conveyor belts. Each line is a long moving table or platform. Each man has his place on the line with a particular job to do all day. For example, at one point on the line at which the engines are assembled you would see a man standing with an electrically driven spanner. Every two minutes or so an engine case arrives in front of him with perhaps eight bolts to be screwed up. By the time he has done this, the line moves on again and the next engine case has arrived in front of him with its eight bolts to be screwed up. And so it goes on all day.

By far the most exciting assembly line is that on which the cars themselves are assembled. At the beginning of the line you see the bare chassis. As it moves along the line it gradually grows into a car. Behind the men who stand by the line is a moving conveyor belt, which brings them the part that it is their job to fix. Heavier parts, such as the engine, are let down from a kind of bridge over the line. At one point a whole car body is let down. Four men here have about four minutes in which to fasten the body on to the chassis before it moves on. Another body then comes down to be fixed to another chassis, and so on all day long.

At the end of the line a man gets into the driver's seat, puts on all the lights to make sure they are working, starts up the engine and drives the new Ford car off the line.

THE UNITED STATES AND THE WORLD



*Chart of America's Share in Pre-war World Production (1939)
Pictorial Statistics*

Forty-five minutes earlier that car was a lot of pieces hanging on conveyor belts or waiting on overhead bridges. A new car passes off the line about every four minutes. There are a number of such assembly lines; and when they are all working, it is possible to turn out 4,000 Ford cars a day. This is mass production.

Here are a few more facts about the Ford plant—one of the best examples of America's Machine Age:—

There are 90 miles of railroad track within the boundaries of the plant.

There are 80 miles of conveyor belt.

The total area of windows is 333 acres.

Five thousand men are employed to keep the place clean. In a month they wear out 5,000 mops and 3,000 brooms, and use 86 tons of soap !

POWER

All these machines we have talked about in this chapter need power to drive them. In most of the factories electric power has now taken the place of steam power. Much coal is used in generating electricity, but more and more use is being made of water power. The Niagara Falls, for example, have been harnessed to provide electric power over a large area of Canada and the north-east part of U.S.A.; and many great dams have been built elsewhere to provide water power to generate electricity.

Oil is the other most important source of power to-day. It is needed to drive the millions of automobiles and trucks on the roads, to drive the tractors and other machines used on the farms, to drive the engines of most of the ships on the lakes and rivers and seas, and without it aeroplanes could not leave the ground. America uses more oil than all the rest of the world put together. Fortunately for her, America has many large oilfields, which together produce two-thirds of the world's total output of oil. To-day the oil industry is one of the most important in the U.S.A.

Coal, water, and oil are the three most important sources of energy for driving machines. Some idea of America's lead in the Machine Age is given by the fact that, of all the energy from these sources produced in the world, America uses up over one half.

CHAPTER 8

FROM PROSPERITY TO DEPRESSION

1919-1929: THE GOLDEN YEARS

In the ten years after the end of the Great War of 1914-18, America appeared to be the most prosperous country in the world. The four long years of war had left all the countries of Europe—victors and vanquished—on the verge of poverty. They had been drained of their wealth. Germany owed huge sums to Britain, France, and Belgium as reparations for the damage she had done. Britain, France, and other countries owed huge sums to America for the money they had borrowed. Taxes in all the countries of Europe were very heavy. Millions of young men had been killed, and yet there was not enough work to provide employment for all those who were left.

Many Americans thought of Europe as old and worn out. The future they were sure lay with their young and vigorous country. America had come into the war in 1917 and her coming had turned the scale in favour of the Allies. The War brought prosperity rather than loss to America. The huge quantities of goods the Allies bought from America had to be paid for, and when their money ran out they borrowed more money in America. Actually little of the money left U.S.A. By the time the War ended, America had changed from a money-owing country to a money-lending country, that is from a debtor to a creditor nation. In the years before the War, America had borrowed large sums from European countries in order to build her railways and factories and to open up her mines and oilfields.

During the War, the great profits of all those industries had enabled her to lend huge sums to the European countries—most of which went up in the smoke of war—and

the balance had changed, making Europe the debtor and America the creditor. It looked as though America was in for a grand period of prosperity—a Golden Age. The profits of industry were ever increasing; wages of skilled workers were higher than anywhere else in the world.

Gambling on the Future. One thing that helped to keep the factories going at full blast was the hire-purchase system—selling goods on the instalment plan. Scores of thousands of salesmen were employed to go around persuading people to buy all kinds of things by instalments. It all seemed very attractive. By paying a few cents a week—or a few dollars a month—you could have, and use now, something that otherwise you would only be able to get after years of saving. Houses, as in this country, were generally bought on the instalment plan; so, often, was the furniture that went into them. When Mr. Jones up the street bought a car, Mrs. Smith persuaded her husband that they ought to have one too—they would only have to pay a few dollars a month. Later, when a persuasive young salesman called on Mrs. Smith and Mrs. Jones and suggested that for a fraction of a dollar a week they could replace the old ice box with a grand new electric refrigerator, it seemed so little to pay that they soon “fell for it.” They probably had already bought a vacuum cleaner and a radio in the same way. And so it went on until many people had even started paying for their graves and their tombstones on the instalment plan.

So millions of American families were living in a state of comfort or even luxury never dreamed of before. But to reach this standard of living they had gambled on the future. Everything depended on Mr. Jones and Mr. Smith keeping their well-paid jobs. Supposing bad times and unemployment came, how then could all the instalments be paid? But only a few cautious people thought of this; the others were all quite sure that prosperity had come to stay.

It was the Golden Age of Big Business. As profits

increased, company shares, which were bought and sold on the Stock Exchange, rose to higher and higher prices. Many people gambled on the Golden Age becoming ever more golden. They bought shares in these prosperous companies in the expectation that before long the shares would be worth more, as the companies became more prosperous. Then they could sell out and pocket the gain. Thus if they bought shares for 100 dollars and a month later the shares were quoted at 120 on the Stock Exchange, they could sell them, having made twenty dollars profit. Several million people went in for this kind of gambling, and more often than not they borrowed the money to do it. If the time came when shares went down instead of up, they would be caught. If they had borrowed the 100 dollars and the shares went down to 80 instead of up to 120, they would have to pay up the 20 they had lost. But few worried about this. The cautious ones did not gamble and the others were sure that prosperity had come to stay.

The prosperity of these golden years was not shared by *all* the people in America. The twelve million poorest families in the country had to live on the same amount of money as the thirty-six thousand richest families. The rich became richer; the middle-class and the skilled workers in industry had a more comfortable standard of living than similar people in any other country. The farmers, however, had no share in this prosperity, nor had the poorly paid unskilled workers.

Farming had boomed in the War years of 1914–18, but when the War ended there came hard times, for which we have seen the reasons elsewhere (see page 59). The prices at which the farmers had to sell their produce went down, while the prices for their tools, clothes, and other necessities went up. In 1929 the price they got for a bushel of wheat would buy only half the goods it would buy in 1919. The 504 richest men in the country earned as much in 1929 as all the 1,300,000 wheat farmers and the 1,032,000 cotton farmers put together.

THE CRASH

In October, 1929, there was great excitement in Wall Street, New York, the home of the New York Stock Exchange. A number of the more cautious people thought their shares had reached the highest price they were likely to reach and they decided to sell out before prices started to go down. When more people are anxious to buy shares than to sell them, prices go up, because the people who are anxious to buy shares offer more and more money for them, as they do for goods at an auction sale. But when more people want to sell shares than to buy them, prices go down, to encourage people to buy. Thus when a large number of people started selling in October, 1929, and not many wanted to buy, prices started to go down. This made other people anxious to sell their shares before prices dropped still further; for, as we have seen, many of them had gambled with money they did not possess. Soon people all over the country were frantically telephoning to their brokers—men who deal in shares—to sell out at once. This made prices drop down still further. The climax was reached on 29th October, 1929, when over sixteen million shares were sold. It had become a panic. By the time the storm of selling had spent itself, thirty thousand million dollars had vanished into thin air. That is to say, the value of shares had gone down by that amount in six weeks. At first, most of the people in the country did not see that this slump on the Stock Exchange could concern them. After all, it was only a small fraction of the people who dealt in shares, why should this Stock Exchange panic affect all the others? But it did touch them all before long. Everlasting prosperity no longer seemed quite so certain. Jobs seemed a little more shaky. People began to think like this: "Perhaps we ought not to have that new motor-car just now." "Perhaps we had better not have the house painted this year after all." "Those plans for a new wing to the factory had better wait until we see how things are." As fewer

orders were coming in, the factories cut down production and dismissed some of their workers. In the next three years one worker in every four lost his job. Then those workers could no longer afford to buy those things they had been buying. Production was cut again, and more men lost their jobs.

From America this Depression spread all over the world. In the prosperous years America had lent huge sums to the European countries. These countries had used the money to pay their debts and buy goods from America. Now they could do neither. This made things still worse in America, for the drop in foreign orders cut down production still further. By 1932 imports and exports had fallen to only one-third of what they had been in 1929.

To make matters worse, thousands of banks in America had to close their doors. Some of the money people had deposited with them had been loaned to other people, who were now bankrupt and could not repay it. Some of it had been invested in shares that were now worth only a fraction of what had been paid for them, or were, perhaps, quite worthless. So people could not get their money back. This happened just at the time when millions had lost their jobs and had only their savings to live on; and now they found their savings also had gone.

Prosperity had ended with the worst crash in history. A short time before, they had been singing "Happy Days are Here Again." Now the people who had always prided themselves on their independence were singing, "Brother, can You spare a Dime?" It was said that when a business man asked for a room at a skyscraper hotel, the clerk asked him whether he wanted it to sleep in or to jump from!

This is what it was like according to an American writer:

First, the bread lines in the poorer districts. Second, those bleak settlements . . . in the outskirts of the cities and on vacant lots—crowds of makeshift shacks constructed out of packing boxes, scrap iron, anything that could be picked up free in a diligent combing of the city dumps: shacks in which men and sometimes whole families of evicted people were sleeping on automobile seats carried

from auto-grave-yards, warming themselves before fires of rubbish in grease drums. Third, the homeless people sleeping in doorways or on park benches, and going the rounds of the restaurants for left-over, half-eaten biscuits, pie crusts, anything to keep the fires of life burning. Fourth, the vastly increased numbers of thumbers on the highways, and particularly of freight-car transients on the railroads; a huge army of drifters ever on the move, searching half aimlessly for a place where there might be a job. . . . Among them were large numbers of young boys, and girls disguised as boys. According to the Children's Bureau, there were 200,000 children thus drifting about the United States. So huge was the number of freight-car hoppers in the south-west, that in a number of places the railroad police simply had to give up trying to remove them from the trains; there were far too many of them.

[*Since Yesterday*, by Frederick Lewis Allen (Hamish Hamilton).]

WHAT HAD HAPPENED?

The great countries of the world had passed through an industrial revolution.

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, three-quarters of the people in America lived by farming, and one-quarter by industry. At the end of the century it was the other way round: one-quarter lived by farming and three-quarters by industry. The growth of industry had meant the opening up of mines and oilfields, the building of railways and factories; and this had meant ever-growing profits for those who put up the money, and ever more jobs for those who wanted work. But by the time of the Great War of 1914, this expansion had nearly reached its limits. There were not many more mines and oilfields to be opened up, and not many more railways to be built. And in many industries there were more than enough factories to make all the goods that people needed. In the 1920's the slowing-up was partly hidden by the fact that recent inventions had created new industries. The invention of the motor car, for example, gave work to millions of people. Between 1919 and 1929 the number of motor-cars in the country increased from 7,000,000 to 24,000,000. This also meant building many new factories, and new jobs were made by the garages

and filling stations that the cars made necessary. The great film industry not only made Hollywood but gave employment to hundreds of thousands in the building of thousands of cinemas. Many more people found jobs in running those cinemas. The radio industry helped to create employment in the making of millions of radio sets and in the actual broadcasting and its organization. In time, however, even these industries ceased to create much new employment.

As we have seen earlier in this chapter, buying on the instalment plan helped to keep production expanding. But this was dangerous, because it meant that millions were buying goods with money they hoped to earn in the future. When hard times came they had to cut down even on necessities, to try to pay for goods for which they still owed money.

“Big Business” had a free run during the Golden Years. From 1921 to 1933 the Republican Party was in power in Congress, and the Presidents, Harding (1921–23), Coolidge (1923–29), and Hoover (1929–33) were all Republicans. The Republican Party believed in leaving “Big Business” alone, and nothing was done to control the growth of huge companies, or “corporations” as they are called in U.S.A. In 1929 there were about 300,000 industrial corporations. But the 200 largest corporations controlled as much wealth as all the other 299,800 put together—an amount equal to all the wealth of Britain. These great corporations controlled whole industries. When there is competition between different companies, each company tries to sell its goods more cheaply than the other, because then more people will buy its goods rather than those of its rivals. However, the great corporations, like the Steel Corporation, could fix high prices with no fear of competition. When hard times came they did not lower prices to enable people to go on buying. Instead they kept prices high, produced less, and dismissed millions of workers.

By the end of 1932, production for the whole country had gone down to about one-half of what it had been in

1929, and the number of unemployed was between twelve and fifteen millions.

In November, 1932, the time came round again to elect a President. Mr. Hoover, who had been President since 1929, was again the candidate of the Republican Party. The candidate of the Democratic Party was Mr. Franklin D. Roosevelt, Governor of New York. Mr. Roosevelt did not believe, as Mr. Hoover did, that the Government should leave things to right themselves. He believed that the Government must take a hand. He promised a New Deal for the "forgotten men." When election day came, Mr. Roosevelt won in forty-two out of forty-eight States. He was elected in November but was not due to take office until March, 1933. Meanwhile the Depression grew worse and worse.

CHAPTER 9

THE NEW DEAL

PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT FIGHTS DEPRESSION*

ON Saturday, 4th March, 1933, the City of Washington was crowded with people who had come in for the Inauguration of the new President. Seated beside Herbert Hoover, the outgoing President, Franklin D. Roosevelt, the new President, drove along Pennsylvania Avenue on his way to the Capitol. People looked at him anxiously. They wondered whether he would prove great enough to save the country from disaster. They gathered hope as they saw his cheerful smile and his determined chin. They knew that the set of that chin was the result of a triumph over disaster in his private life. The smile was perhaps the result of his early years of comfort and success. He was a member of a wealthy family and had been to one of the most expensive schools in the country. He went on to study law, but he had no need to earn his living as a lawyer. He became interested in politics, and, when he was twenty-nine, was elected as a Senator in the Assembly of New York State. President Wilson, who became President in 1913, made him his Assistant Secretary of the Navy and he helped to build up America's great Fleet in the Great War, 1914-18.

In 1920 he was the Democratic candidate for the Vice-Presidency, but the Republicans won that election. It looked, however, as though he had a great career before him. Then suddenly in 1921 he was stricken down with infantile paralysis. This disease is often fatal; if not fatal it frequently leaves the sufferer a paralysed invalid. But

* Franklin Delano Roosevelt was the second Roosevelt to become President of the U.S.A. A distant cousin of his, named Theodore Roosevelt, was President from 1901 to 1909 (see p. 96).

here Roosevelt's iron determination showed itself. He said, "It is ridiculous to tell me that a grown man cannot conquer a child's sickness." Once he was out of danger he began to force himself back to an active life. In spite of terrible pain he insisted on swimming and taking other forms of exercise in order to regain the use of his limbs. He can still walk only with difficulty, but he won his fight. He went back into politics. In 1928, only seven years after the beginning of his illness, he was elected Governor of the State of New York. Four years later, in November, 1932, he was elected President of U.S.A., at the most difficult time in her history since Lincoln was elected on the eve of the Civil War.

Between Roosevelt's election in November, 1932, and his Inauguration in March, 1933, the Depression steadily grew worse. As banks continued to fail, more and more people decided to draw their money out of those which remained before they too closed their doors. Queues of people were often seen outside banks clamouring to get their money out while there was still a chance. But many of the banks could not find enough money to pay all these people immediately. Much of it had been invested in shares that were now practically worthless, and there was nothing they could do but close their doors, leaving the queues to break up in despair—for many of the people were out of work, and now did not know how they were going to live.

This, then, was the state of affairs when Roosevelt took office on Saturday, 4th March, 1933. The people wanted action, and they got it. The first thing the new President did was to close all banks and summon Congress to give him special powers to take them in hand. On Sunday, 12th March, he gave the first of his famous Fireside Talks to the nation over the radio. He told the people that some of the banks would open again the next day and others in the days following. He explained simply how the banking system worked and urged people to have confidence in what was being done and to put their money back. On Monday

morning there were again queues outside the banks, but this time they had come to put their money in, not to take it out. President Roosevelt had won his first great battle.



Franklin D. Roosevelt

In his Inaugural Address, he had said "the only thing we have to fear is fear itself," and he had conquered fear and given the people hope.

Yet the task before him was gigantic. Banking was in a bad way. Industry was in a bad way. Farming was in a bad way. The number of unemployed together with the families depending on them totalled more than the whole

population of Britain. Plans were needed to deal with scores of nation-wide problems. Wise planning needs careful thought and long preparation, but all these problems were terribly urgent if the nation was to be saved from disaster. No wonder, then, that some of the schemes proved unworkable. It is more surprising, considering the haste with which they were prepared, that so many proved successful.

During the next few months, all the departments of the Government at Washington were working at break-neck speed. New departments were set up to deal with special problems. All the new organizations were called by their initial letters for short? N.R.A., A.A.A., F.C.A., H.O.L.C., C.C.C., W.P.A., P.W.A., T.V.A., etc. People called it all "The Alphabetical Soup." We cannot describe all the new organizations here, but let us have a look at some of them.

THE ALPHABETICAL SOUP

A.A.A.—The Agricultural Adjustment Administration. As we have seen, the farmers were in a bad way. Prices were very low and the farmers were producing more than they could sell. The New Deal for Agriculture began with the Agriculture Adjustment Act, which Congress passed in May, 1933. Its aim was to help the farmers to get better prices for their goods. This would happen, it was believed, if the total amount grown was cut down. Farmers were to be paid money to grow less. If they agreed to grow less wheat or to plough up some of the cotton which they had already sown, or to kill off some of their hogs, they would receive a money payment from the Government. Money was to be raised by taxing the "Processors"—the people who turn the raw material into food; for example, the millers who grind the wheat or the meat packers who slaughter the animals.

The plan worked: prices did rise. In 1937 the annual income from farming was double what it had been in 1932.

The Government was well aware, however, that the improvement was not evenly spread. Hired farm workers suffered because cutting down production meant less work for them. In the South, the poor share-croppers got the worst of the bargain again. It was their landlords who profited. They could turn out the share-croppers and get the Government grant for *not* using their land. The A.A.A. resettled some of the share-croppers on new farms, but only a few could be helped in this way.

In January, 1936, the Supreme Court declared the Agricultural Adjustment Act unconstitutional. Congress, it declared, had not the power to put on a "Processors' Tax." A month later Congress passed the Soil Conservation Act, which kept many of the best points of the A.A.A. Farmers were still paid to grow less, but the money came out of the ordinary taxes, and the farmers had to promise to grow grass and other soil-restoring crops on the land on which they had cut down their main crops. The Soil Conservation Service is doing fine work to-day in restoring the wasted land of America. (See Chapter 6.)

F.C.A.—Farm Credit Administration. One of the special problems of the farmers was that they owed more money than they could pay to the banks and insurance companies for the mortgages on their land. Some had borrowed money to buy their farms, others had borrowed money to tide them over bad times. In either case if they could not pay, the farms became the property of the banks or insurance companies that had lent the money, and the farmers had to take their families elsewhere. Every month thousands of farmers were losing their farms in this way. The New Deal put an end to this. The Government provided the money for the farmers to pay off their mortgages. The farmers still owed the money, but to the Government instead of to the banks. And the Government was not out to make a profit. It charged a lower rate of interest and often spread payment over a long period, making the

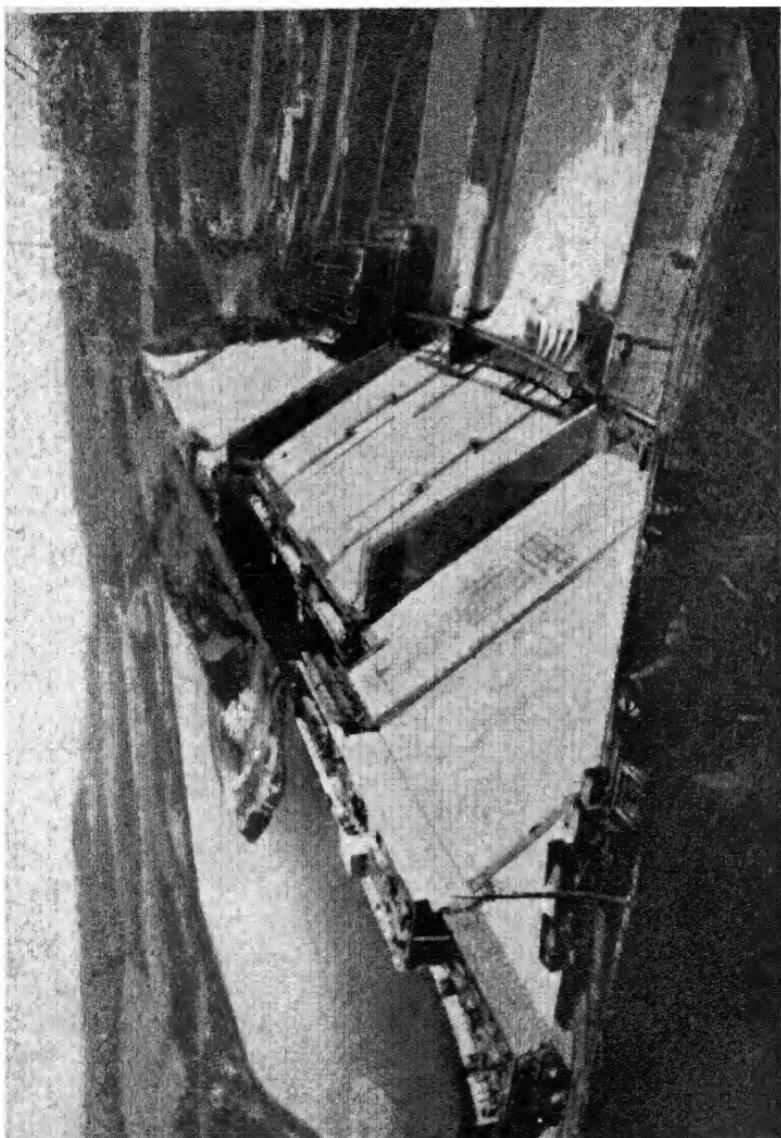
amounts to be paid each year still less. Suppose a farmer owed a thousand dollars, he would have to pay the banks anything from 6 to 12 per cent interest: that would mean between 60 and 120 dollars a year in interest alone. The F.C.A. charged only 3½ to 5 per cent, so the same farmer would now have to pay only 35 to 50 dollars in interest. As for repayment, if originally the mortgage had to be repaid in ten years, then 100 dollars would have to be paid back each year as well as the interest. If the F.C.A. gave the farmer twenty years to pay, he would have to pay back only 50 dollars each year besides interest.

H.O.L.C.—Home Owners' Loan Corporation.—This did for the millions who were buying houses by instalments the same thing as the F.C.A. did for the farmers. In a Fireside Chat to the nation in October, 1933, President Roosevelt said: "If there is any family in the United States about to lose its home or about to lose its chattels, that family should telegraph at once, either to the Farm Credit Administration or to the Home Owners' Loan Corporation in Washington, requesting their help."

N.R.A.—National Recovery Administration. The N.R.A. was set up to carry out the N.I.R.A., the National Industrial Recovery Act, which tried to do for industry what the A.A.A. did for farming.

The aim was to help both workers and employers. For the workers the aim was to raise wages and reduce hours of work, and to enable them to form Unions to guard their own interests. For employers the aim was to put an end to cut-throat competition. Sets of rules called codes were to be worked out to provide these things in each industry. As the employers had the biggest share in drawing up these codes, the codes often helped them more than they helped the workers. Nor did all the employers obey all the codes directly. There is an amusing story, which may be true, about one employer who was told he would have to pay

Building the Norris Dam, on the Tennessee River



his office boys three dollars a week more. So he called them together and told them that he was raising their wages three dollars a week; but, he added, they would have to come to work at 8.30 instead of 9 a.m. If they were half an hour late, they would be fined half a dollar, and if they were *not* half an hour late six days a week, they would be fired!

The N.R.A. scheme was probably too ambitious to work. It brought some improvements, but in the end the Supreme Court declared the National Industrial Recovery Act unconstitutional. New Acts that saved some of the best parts of the scheme were then passed.

N.L.R.B.—National Labour Relations Board. This Board was set up by an Act which made it illegal for employers to prevent their workers joining Trades Unions. The N.L.R.B. was set up to see fair play and to settle disputes between unions and employers. The employers tried hard to get the Act declared unconstitutional by the Supreme Court. But this time they failed, and as a result the Trades Unions have made a great advance in recent years. Their greatest triumph occurred in 1941 when Henry Ford, who had fought against Trades Unions all his life and had refused to have union men, gave in and allowed the United Automobile Workers' Association to organize the workers in his factories.

T.V.A.—Tennessee Valley Administration. This was a great experiment in Government planning. The region of the Tennessee River Valley covers parts of seven States. The river is one of the most important in the country. It often flooded and badly needed controlling. The land through which it flowed had been very fertile, but much of it was now useless, all the best soil having been swept away by wind and rain.

The control of rivers belongs to the Federal Government, and Congress gave the Government power to set up the T.V.A. to build dams to control the Tennessee River.

Several great dams were built or are being built. They will prevent floods and make it possible to use the river for transporting goods all the year round. They also make it possible to generate electricity on a large scale, and cables take the electricity to farms and towns all over the area. One of the most important things about the scheme is that this electric power costs its users only half as much as power supplied elsewhere in the country by profit-making corporations. These corporations have tried hard to get the Supreme Court to declare the T.V.A. scheme unconstitutional, but they have failed.

Besides supplying cheap power to the farmers, the T.V.A. uses the water power created by the dams to manufacture fertilizers, which are distributed cheaply. The Soil Conservation Service has been called in to restore the wasted land, and to-day this area is one of the most thriving areas in the country. This experiment in Government planning and control has worked. It may well prove an example for the future both in America and elsewhere.

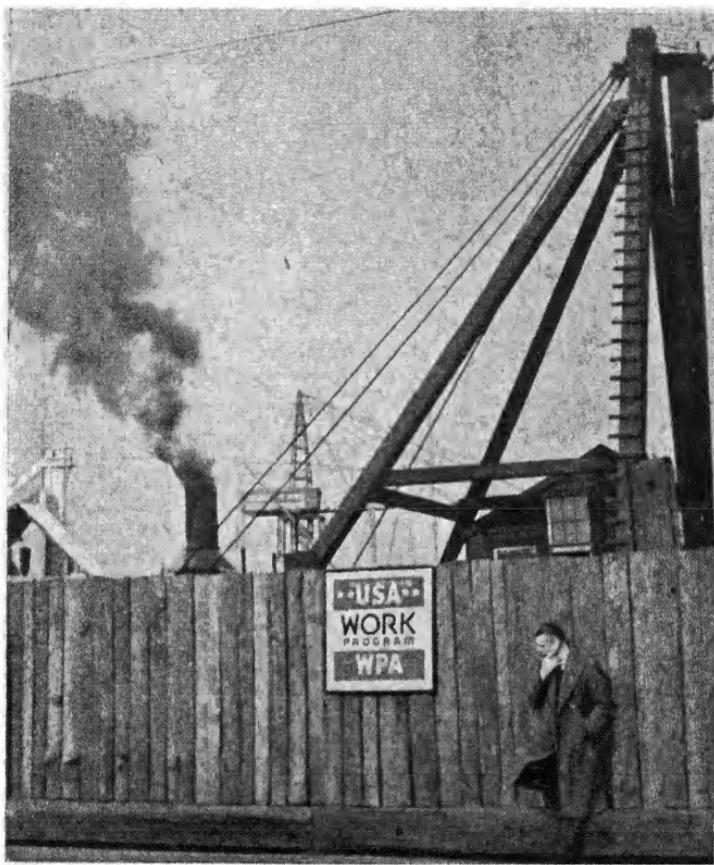
W.P.A.—Works Progress Administration. The W.P.A. provided relief for those who were out of work. There was no unemployment insurance or dole in America, and the Government decided that something must be done to prevent widespread starvation. They were not prepared to give money to the unemployed except in return for work, because they knew how bad it was for people to be idle for months on end. For several years the W.P.A. gave employment to between one and three million people. The work included making roads, building bridges, schools, hospitals, parks, airports, etc. The W.P.A. money was not always spent as usefully as this. Hard-worked officials sometimes found it difficult to find new jobs for all the people who were in need of relief. Yet they were not allowed to give them money except in return for work, so what could they do? It was said that in some places money was given for such useless jobs as sweeping leaves from one side of the street

to another. Someone invented the picturesque name of "Boondoggling" for this useless kind of work.

The W.P.A. funds were also used for out-of-work actors, artists, and musicians. Travelling companies of W.P.A. actors and actresses put on some very fine shows in towns where plays were rarely seen. W.P.A. orchestras also helped to prevent musicians from losing their skill in idleness and gave a great deal of pleasure as well. Artists were employed to paint wall pictures on the many new buildings, and art exhibitions were arranged for them.

C.C.C.—Civilian Conservation Corps. One of the most serious problems of the New Deal concerned unemployed youths of eighteen to twenty-five. A quarter of all the young men in the country between these ages were out of work, yet they were the people who most needed to live active lives. Loafing about the streets was bad. Many joined gangs and took to lives of crime. The New Deal's cure for them was a healthy outdoor life in camps. Hundreds of these C.C.C. camps were set up in various parts of the country. A youth spends about nine months at camp. He is given useful, healthy work, such as clearing trails in the forest to make it easier to fight fires, planting trees to prevent soil erosion, making swimming-pools, etc. Some time is given to education and there is plenty of time for sports. The C.C.C. youths are paid 30 dollars a month, of which they have to send 25 dollars home, as they are drawn from families in which very often nobody is earning any wages. Even people who dislike the New Deal speak with admiration of the work which the C.C.C. camps are doing.

S.S.B.—Social Security Board. One reason why the people of America were so hard hit by the depression was that there was no unemployment insurance for the worker when he lost his job. Nor were there any old age pensions, which Germany had provided since 1891, and Britain since 1909. W.P.A. funds, C.C.C. camps, and other forms of relief were



Hope for the Unemployed

Photo by W. Eugene Smith

all very well as temporary measures, but they did not give the feeling of security that the worker needed. So Congress passed the Social Security Act. This provided money from Federal funds for those States that would introduce unemployment insurance and old age pensions. Before long every State had agreed to do this. The S.S.B.—Social Security Board—was set up to carry out this Act.

SUCCESS OR FAILURE?

A full account of the New Deal would have to mention many more laws and many more organizations. However, these few we have described should give an idea of the tremendous attempt made to cure the ills from which the country was suffering. If we ask whether the New Deal was a success or a failure, the answer is that it was a bit of both.

One of its chief aims was to cure unemployment. It reduced it, but it certainly did not find a cure. Up to the outbreak of war in Europe in 1939 the unemployed were never less than eight million. As a result of the war several million found employment in war industries, and then others in the fighting forces; but the real problem still remains to be solved.

Another aim of the New Deal was to increase industrial production. There certainly was an increase, and profits rose again. But many factories introduced new labour-saving machinery, and so did not take on many more workers. "Big Business" did not like the New Deal. Powerful bankers and industrialists hated so much Government control. Because they did not want it to succeed, they did not help as much as they could have done. While Big Business takes the view that recovery was delayed by so much Government interference, many other people believe that the New Deal failed to solve the problems of production and unemployment because there was still not enough Government control. Some would like to see the control of the main industries taken out of the hands of private individuals altogether.

The greatest success of the New Deal was that it made it the Government's business to give security to the common man. The dreadful fear of want was removed. There were pensions for the aged. Unemployment insurance meant that, when work failed, the worker would still have money with which to buy food. Another Act introduced minimum

wages for some of the worst-paid people. The fear of being made homeless was largely removed by the F.C.A. and the H.O.L.C. The workers gained the right to bargain with their employers to secure fair conditions of work.

In earlier times Governments had measured national prosperity in terms of profits of industry and prices of shares on the Stock Exchange. President Roosevelt believed that national prosperity concerned each of the 130 million people in the country, and he gave these people a New Deal, which meant a new hope.

CHAPTER 10

U.S.A. AND HER NEIGHBOURS

LATIN AMERICA

THE name "Latin America" is given to the twenty Republics that are the southern neighbours of U.S.A. Of these twenty, three are islands or parts of islands in the Caribbean Sea: Cuba, Haiti, and the Dominican Republic. Seven are in Central America between U.S.A. and the Isthmus of Panama: Mexico, Guatemala, Honduras, Salvador, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, and Panama. The rest are in South America: the three most important of these are the A.B.C. Republics—Argentine, Brazil, and Chile; the others are Colombia, Venezuela, Ecuador, Peru, Paraguay, Uruguay, and Bolivia.

The total population of these twenty Republics is about 125 millions, less than the population of U.S.A. The largest in area is Brazil, which is actually larger than U.S.A. Most of South America lies farther to the East than U.S.A.—in fact it is all east of a line drawn due south from Detroit. At one point Brazil is only 1,600 miles from Africa. In travel time, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, and Buenos Aires, Argentina, are nearer to Plymouth, England, than they are to New York. It takes fifteen days by sea from Buenos Aires to Plymouth, and eighteen or nineteen days from Buenos Aires to New York. When the journey by air from Buenos Aires to Berlin took four days, that to New York took six.

These twenty Republics are called Latin America because they used to belong to the Latin countries of Spain and Portugal. Their native population was American Indian. The ancient Indian races such as the Incas, Aztecs, and Mayas had civilizations of their own several thousand years ago, but little is known about them as yet.

Three races have helped to make up the population of Latin America—the Indians, Spaniards (and some Portuguese), and the Negroes who were taken there as slaves. These races have become mixed. The people of unmixed



Spanish descent are called *Creoles*; those who are a mixture of White and Indian blood are called *Mestizo*; and those who are a mixture of White and Negro are called *Mulatto*; while those who are a mixture of Indian and Negro blood are called *Zambos*. Also there are still people of pure Indian

and pure Negro blood. There was nothing like so much immigration from Europe to Latin America in the nineteenth century as there was to U.S.A., but there has been a great increase in recent years, especially of German and Italian immigrants. Germans are numerous in Southern Brazil and Italians in the Argentine.

The Latin American countries won their independence from Spain and Portugal in the first quarter of the nineteenth century. Central and South America might have been divided up by the European countries as Africa was had not the U.S.A. stepped in, in 1823, and warned the European countries to keep their hands off the American Continent. The warning was given by President Monroe, and it has come to be called the Monroe Doctrine. We shall come across the Monroe Doctrine again in Chapter 12.

The Latin American countries were independent, but they were far from peaceful in the nineteenth century. There were several disputes over boundaries, which led to war. In nearly every country there was a small group of very rich landowners (at one time half the land in Mexico was owned by less than 3,000 people) with a large number of very poor peasants and mine workers who were little better than slaves. The few rich landowners fought among themselves for power, bringing misery to millions of the poor people. In one period of fifty-three years, Mexico had fifty-seven Presidents and one Emperor; and almost every one of these rulers came to power by working up a revolution. Even to-day democracy is only a catchword in most of the Latin American States; many of them are ruled by Dictators of one kind or another.

U.S.A. BECOMES INTERESTED

The Latin American countries are rich in many kinds of raw materials. It was their gold and silver which first attracted Spaniards and Portuguese in the sixteenth century. To-day they produce great quantities of some of the foods which are little grown in U.S.A. and Europe—sugar,

coffee, and cocoa for example; the Argentine is the greatest beef-producing country in the world. They also produce many of the metals which America and other countries badly need, especially for war production: tin and copper are two important examples. Chile is the world's greatest producer of nitrates, which are used in making explosives and fertilizers.

In the last quarter of the nineteenth century, U.S.A. became much more interested in Latin America than she had been earlier. The Latin American countries were useful to U.S.A. in three ways. (1) They supplied food for her rapidly growing population and materials for her rapidly growing industries. (2) As they had few factories, they made fine markets in which to sell goods produced in the factories of U.S.A. (3) They were also a useful field in which to invest the growing profits of American industries. These profits were also used for building more railways in America and expanding America's own industries, but towards the end of the nineteenth century there was not enough new work in U.S.A. to use up all the surplus capital. So the financiers turned to Latin America and got permission from the various governments to develop the mines and oilfields there and to build railways, to cultivate sugar plantations, and to invest their money in many other activities. This was a new kind of Imperialism—Economic Imperialism it was called. America, unlike Britain, did not need colonies where her surplus population could go and live, but she did want somewhere where her surplus capital could go and earn more profits. The financiers who invested their money in the Latin American countries demanded a high rate of interest because it was risky business. But when there was unrest in any of those countries they demanded that the United States Government should step in and safeguard their money. In 1898 U.S.A. fought a war with Spain. The excuse was that it was to free Cuba from Spanish tyranny, but it was at least as much due to the desire of those who ran the sugar industry to get

control of one of the richest sugar-producing areas in the world. The U.S.A. won that war, and in about two months Cuba became free in name, but in fact was closely tied to U.S.A. Spain also handed over to U.S.A. the Philippine Islands (receiving twenty million dollars as compensation) and Guam in the Pacific, and the island of Puerto Rico in the Caribbean Sea.

Some hoped that the New Imperialism would go still further. In that same year, 1898, an American Senator said in a speech at Boston, "American factories are making more than the American people can use. American soil is producing more than they can consume. Fate has written our policy for us; the trade of the world must and shall be ours. And we shall get it as our Mother (England) has told us how . . . great colonies governing themselves, flying our flag and trading with us will grow about our posts of trade. . . ."

THEODORE ROOSEVELT AND DOLLAR DIPLOMACY

President Theodore Roosevelt (1901-1909) upheld the New Imperialism. His policy came to be known as Dollar Diplomacy because it protected the dollars of American financiers. When any of the small Latin American countries were unable to pay their debts or interfered with American business interests, American marines were sent to establish order and to control the customs offices at their ports. These marines collected the customs duties, paid off the debts owed to American and other financiers, and then handed over any money that was left to the Government of the country where they were. At one time or another they interfered in Mexico, Haiti, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Honduras and Nicaragua.

THE PANAMA CANAL

Theodore Roosevelt decided that the time had come to cut a canal from the Atlantic to the Pacific Ocean. If this were done, it would shorten the sea route from New York

to San Francisco by 8,000 miles. De Lesseps, the Frenchman who built the Suez Canal in 1869, had founded a company to build one through the Isthmus of Panama, but it had been a miserable failure. Millions of dollars were lost, and one-third of the men who worked on it had died of yellow fever, malaria, or typhus.

Panama was part of the State of Colombia, and Theodore Roosevelt tried in vain to get Colombia to agree to let U.S.A. build the canal through the isthmus. Suddenly, on 3rd November, 1903, the province of Panama revolted against Colombia. American warships stood conveniently by to prevent the Colombian Government sending troops to put down the revolt. Three days later U.S.A. recognized Panama as an independent country. Within a fortnight a treaty was signed between the new State of Panama and U.S.A., selling to U.S.A. a strip of land ten miles wide through the isthmus. Many Americans were far from proud of the bullying way in which their Government had acted. Many years later, when Wilson was President of America, a large sum of money was paid to Colombia to make up for the way she had been treated in 1903.

Work on the canal started at once, but it was soon realized that it would fail unless the yellow fever—the dreaded “Yellow Jack”—and malaria were conquered. Scientists had recently discovered that either of these diseases can be caught only from the bite of a mosquito that has bitten someone already suffering from it. So the thing to do was to get rid of the mosquitoes as far as possible, and to shut the people who fell sick away from mosquitoes, which might bite them and then go and give the disease to someone else. In 1904, Colonel Gorgas was sent to Panama to try to stamp out the yellow fever and malaria. He knew that mosquitoes thrive on refuse and in dirty cisterns and tanks, in swamps and stagnant pools, so work on the canal was stopped while all the workers were put on to the job of cleaning up the whole area. Modern drains and sewage works were built in the towns and villages. A pure water

supply was laid down in place of the dirty cisterns that had been used for storing water. Swamps were drained and pools filled in. Hospitals were built to care for those who fell sick and to keep them away from the mosquitoes. By the end of 1906 the war against yellow fever, the more deadly of the two diseases, had been won ; there were no more cases. It proved harder to beat malaria. In 1906 there were nearly 22,000 cases of malaria among the 26,000 workmen. By 1913 the number had dropped to 7,000 cases among 40,000 workmen. That disease, too, was gradually being defeated. To-day the canal zone is as healthy as any American city.

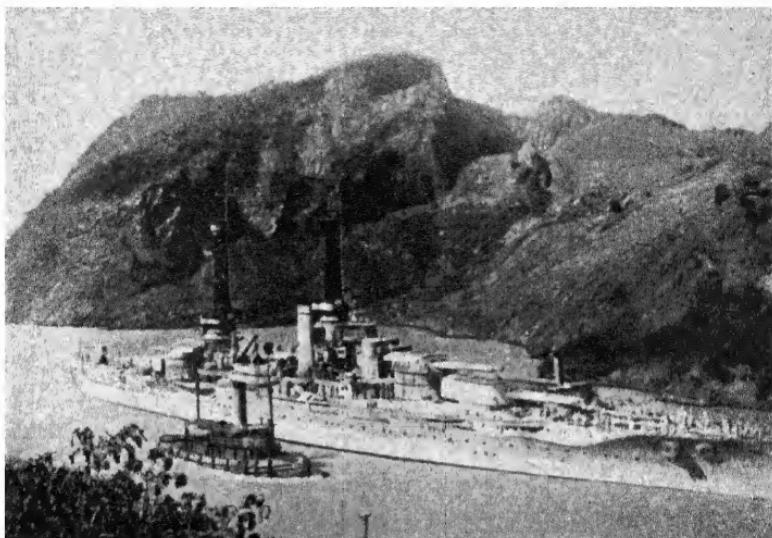
Once disease had been conquered, they began in President Theodore Roosevelt's words, "to make the dirt fly." In August, 1914, the Canal was opened to traffic. It is 50 miles long from Ocean to Ocean. Soon after leaving the Atlantic Ocean ships are raised 85 feet by great locks into Gatun Lake. After steaming for 24 miles across this lake they pass through the Culebra (now called the Gaillard) Cut, a nine-mile-long channel cut through a mountain. Beyond this they drop by a lock to another lake two miles long, still 55 feet above sea-level; then more locks bring them down to sea-level. Thus the Panama Canal is like a great water bridge across the isthmus. Besides the Gaillard Cut and the great locks, the engineers had to build huge dams at each end to hold the water up.

To-day the Panama Canal is of vital importance to America; for by it warships can be quickly moved to and from the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans as need arises. It is now one of the most heavily guarded places in the world. In 1941, to make its defences still stronger, America got permission from Britain to build air and naval bases on some of the British West Indian Islands near it.

FRANKLIN ROOSEVELT AND THE "GOOD NEIGHBOUR POLICY"

Naturally, the Latin American countries were suspicious of their powerful neighbour in the North. In the present

century they have gradually become more independent and therefore less willing to be interfered with. When Franklin Roosevelt became President in 1933 he was anxious to end the old "Dollar Diplomacy" and the suspicion. In his first



*The Panama Canal: An American Warship passing through
the Culebra (or Gaillard) Cut*

Inaugural Address, on 4th March, 1933, he said that U.S.A. would in future play the part of the "good neighbour"—"the neighbour who resolutely respects himself and because he does so respects the rights of others."

He carried out this policy, and the various Pan-American conferences—conferences of the twenty-one Republics of the American Continent—have gradually brought about a much more friendly spirit between U.S.A. and her twenty southern neighbours.

Here is an example of a real change in America's attitude to these countries. In 1938 the Mexican Government took

over all the oil wells that were held by foreign companies. In former times America's Government would probably have used force to make Mexico change her policy, but Franklin Roosevelt's Government refused to do this, and told the oil companies that if they had complaints the proper place to have them dealt with was in the Mexican courts.

The final results of President Roosevelt's new policy are yet to be seen, but it is already true that more friendly relations exist between U.S.A. and Latin America than ever before in the history of the Western Hemisphere.

CHAPTER 11

AMERICA AND THE PACIFIC

THE PACIFIC OCEAN

THE Pacific Ocean covers an area greater than all the land of the world put together. If possible, you should look at it on a globe, for it is difficult to show it accurately on a flat map. On most maps, the shortest route from San Francisco in California to Yokohama in Japan appears to be via Hawaii. If, however, you take a globe and put one end of a piece of string on Yokohama and the other end on San Francisco, you find that the shortest route takes you farther north, where the circumference of the globe is smaller. This "Great Circle" route, as it is called, takes ships nearly as far north as the Aleutian Islands, which stretch out into the Pacific in a long line from Alaska. Both this and the more southerly route via Hawaii are used in crossing the Pacific; although over 1,000 miles longer than the Great Circle route, the southerly route is more popular, because there are more convenient stopping-places on the way.

It was a hazardous adventure to cross the Pacific in the days of sailing ships. The journey was so long that it was almost impossible to carry sufficient food and water. It became easier when steamships came into use, but even these had to follow a route that enabled them to call at island ports to take in fresh supplies of coal. Only with the introduction of oil-burning engines was it possible for ships to make the journey right across the ocean without re-fuelling.

THE AWAKENING OF JAPAN

On 8th July, 1853, a small American naval squadron under Commodore Matthew C. Perry sailed into Yokohama

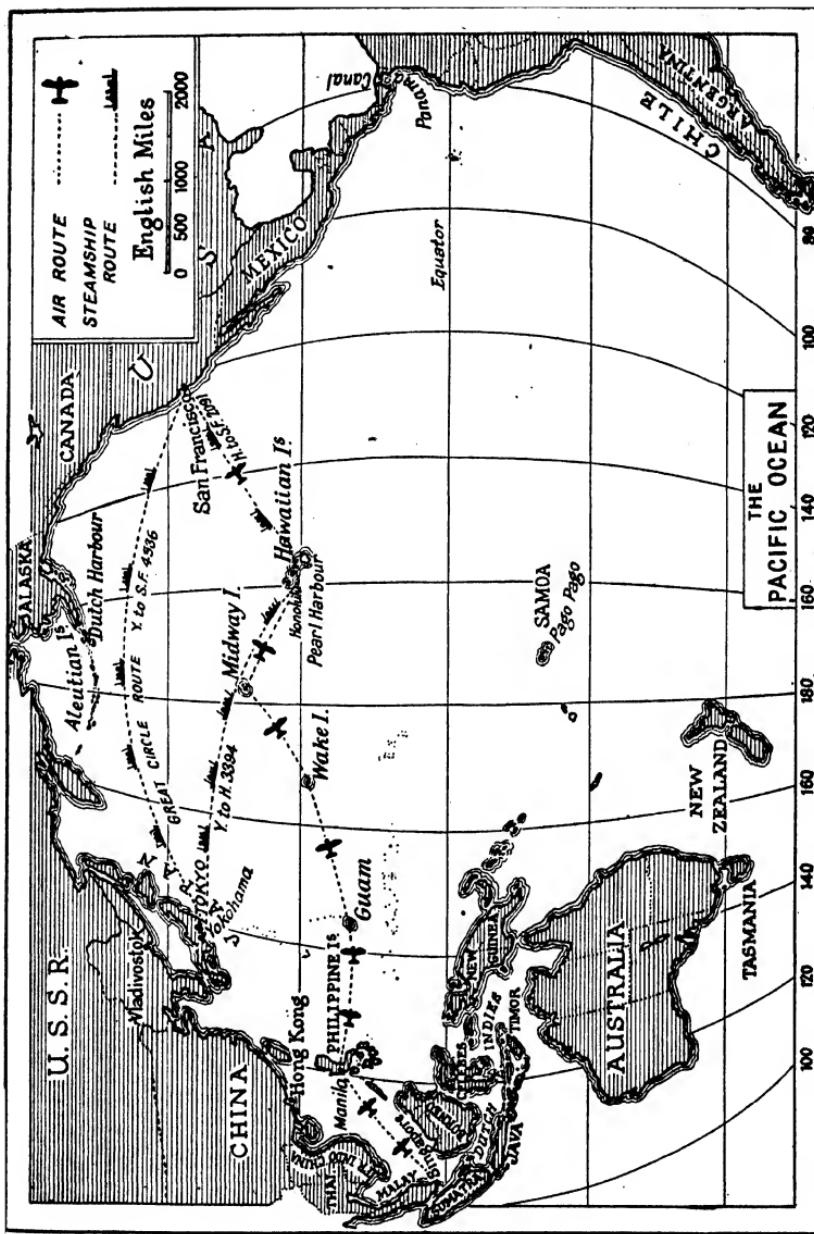
Bay. There had once been a small Dutch trading settlement in Japan, but Japan had now been entirely closed to foreigners for two hundred years. It was known as "the hermit kingdom." Perry brought a request that Japan should open her ports to trade with America, and the presence of his fleet suggested that force might be used if the request were not granted. He sailed away again to give the Japanese time to think it over. He came back again early in 1854 and found that his request was to be granted. A treaty was signed and presents were exchanged. Perry gave the Japanese a set of telegraph instruments, a tiny locomotive, and some farm tools. In return he received some fine Japanese silk and beautiful lacquer work.

The awakening of Japan did not work out quite as the Americans had expected. As an American humorist has said, "*We knocked at the door and they came out.*" In the second half of the nineteenth century Japan built up great industries and a great merchant navy. In 1905 she fought a war with one of the western powers, Russia, and won. It was then realized that Japan was a great power to be reckoned with, and America found that her quest for trade had resulted in giving her a dangerous rival.

AMERICA EXPANDS IN THE PACIFIC

Alaska. As her trade in the Pacific grew, America began to look for new bases in that Ocean. The first one she obtained seemed to be of little use at the time. Alaska, in the north-west corner of the American Continent, then belonged to Russia. America bought Alaska in 1867 for about £1,500,000. Some people thought it was a waste of money. They accused the Government of buying an iceberg. It was not known then that Alaska contained rich goldfields, nor was it realized how such a distant possession could become an important link in America's chain of defence in the Pacific.

The aeroplane and submarine and the greater range of modern steamships made Alaska very important. At Dutch



Harbour in the Aleutian Islands, for example, there is a great naval and submarine base, close to the “Great Circle” shipping route and little more than 2,000 miles from Japan.

Samoa. Far away in the South Pacific lie the Samoan Islands. Commander Meade of the U.S. Navy, cruising round these islands in 1872, came across Pago-Pago harbour in one of the islands named Tutuila. He liked the look of this harbour and bargained with the local chieftains for the use of it. Six years later a treaty taking it over officially was agreed to by the American Senate.

Hawaiian Islands. A little over 2,000 miles west of San Francisco in California lie the Hawaiian Islands. They used to be called the Sandwich Islands, and it was here that Captain Cook met his death. They first became important to America as the “Sugar Bowl” from which the sugar was obtained that is needed for California’s great fruit-canning industry.

In 1893 American planters worked up a revolution which resulted in Queen Liliuokalani retiring into private life. The new government asked that the islands should be taken over by America. The American President, Grover Cleveland, found out that American sugar planters were really responsible for the revolution and he favoured putting the Queen back on the throne; but Congress decided otherwise, and the Hawaiian Islands became American territory in 1898. Besides the sugar, they provided America with a fine Pacific naval base at Pearl Harbour.

The Philippines and Guam. In the same year that the Hawaiian Islands were taken over, 1898, America gained other important islands in the Pacific. By the treaty which ended the Spanish-American War (see last chapter) Spain handed over the Philippine Islands, right over on the western side of the Pacific, and Guam. Guam was important as a stopping-place on the way to the Philippines,

and about 1940 America started to fortify it, intending to make it into a strong naval base. The Philippines have been promised their independence in 1946. America carried on a rich trade with the islands. Japan also wanted this trade, and it was inevitable that the Philippines should become one of the centres of conflict in the war between Japan and America.

PACIFIC RIVALS

Far away in the south-west corner of the Pacific lie the Dutch East Indies and the Malay States. This area is one of the richest in raw materials in the world. It has been producing 94 per cent of the world's rubber and 75 per cent of the world's tin. It is rich in oil, sugar, tea, rice, coffee, and cocoa, and several of the rarer metals that are used in steel production. The Dutch island of Java is almost the only source of cinchona bark, from which quinine is obtained. Many of these raw materials went to America, the rubber and tin being especially valuable to her. Japan also cast longing eyes at the East Indies and Malay, needing above all else their oil. Britain, too, has a very great interest in this area, and in order to defend it built a great naval fortress at Singapore. Japan has long been trying to set up what she calls a New Order in East Asia. She seized Manchuria in 1931 and has been waging undeclared war on China since 1937. The Chinese people have put up a heroic resistance; and when, in December, 1941, Japan attacked America and the British Empire, China officially declared war on Japan, thus becoming an ally of U.S.A. and Britain.

Since the beginning of the century, it has been America's policy to preserve the "Open Door" in China. That means that all countries should be able to trade freely there, although none should seize parts of China for themselves. Japan's aim of a New Order in East Asia is in conflict with the American policy of the "Open Door," which has the support of Britain.

The Pacific Ocean seems a long way away from us, but three of the British Dominions face that ocean: Australia, New Zealand, and Canada. So in war with Japan, the British Empire and America are bound to work closely together.

Another look at the map will show that America's chief bases in the Pacific were Pearl Harbour in the Hawaiian Islands and Dutch Harbour in the Aleutian Islands. America established no other base large enough to take the largest battleships, though smaller warships could use Pago-Pago in Samoa, Manila in the Philippines, and Guam.

From 1936-41, America had an air service between America and the Philippines and thence to the Far East. On the way to the Philippines the Clippers used the islands of Hawaii, Midway, Wake, and Guam as stopping-places. The journey by air took only six or seven days instead of the three weeks it takes by fast ocean liner.

As long ago as 1921 General Smuts said: "The problems of the Pacific are to my mind the world problems of the next fifty years." His prophecy may well prove true, and in solving these problems America has a major part to play.

CHAPTER 12

AMERICA AND OURSELVES

ISOLATIONISM

THE word “Isolationist” has often been heard in America of recent years. It was used to describe those people who wanted America to have as little as possible to do with the outside world, especially with Europe.

These Isolationists, however, made up only a small part of the American nation. In Britain people were often bitter about them, and accused them of wanting other people to keep the world safe for them. Yet it was not so long ago that people in Britain had the same idea. The British Government at the end of the last century boasted of its policy of Splendid Isolation. And much nearer our own time, in the years before 1939, many people urged that we should have nothing to do with the League of Nations lest it should drag us into European quarrels; that we should isolate ourselves from Europe and concentrate on the British Empire. Isolation was the watchword of at least one of our national daily papers.

In time our Isolationists came to understand that, in the world as it is to-day, isolation is no longer possible: what affects one country is bound to affect others sooner or later. Yet if *we* could believe isolation to be possible when our country was only separated from Europe by the twenty miles of English Channel, it is only natural that the idea should have lasted longer in America, which is separated from Europe by the 3,000 miles of the Atlantic Ocean.

In the earlier years of her history many things besides distance helped to isolate America from Europe. To start with, the War of Independence was fought because the colonists wanted to break away from Britain and be a

separate people. Again, the first American President, George Washington, in his Farewell Address to the nation, warned his people against making permanent alliances with other countries. The size of the country also helped to breed the spirit of isolation. The new nation had the whole width of the continent in which to expand; and as they opened it up they found that it provided nearly everything that they needed at that time.

As we have seen (Chapter 3), the people who went out to settle in America and who helped to build the American nation were, many of them, fleeing from oppression and want in Europe. They sought a new life in the New World and they hoped that they had cut themselves off from the Old World for good. They were naturally isolationist.

In Chapter 10 we saw how the Monroe Doctrine came to be made in 1823. The American Government warned European countries against interfering in the affairs of the American continent. At the same time it declared that America would take no part in the affairs of Europe. The Monroe Doctrine became the key to American foreign policy and it is a doctrine of Isolation.

So we see that America's distance from Europe, its size, its plentiful natural resources, the origins of its people, and its long-established foreign policy all helped to isolate America from Europe. And yet the day came, on 7th December, 1941, when America could no longer remain in isolation.

THE END OF ISOLATION

One of the reasons why America could no longer keep isolated from the rest of the world was that she herself had expanded into parts of the world where her interests clashed with those of other nations. This is especially true of the Pacific, as we saw in the last chapter. Once America had the Philippines and other important interests in the Pacific, there was always a possibility of her coming into conflict with Japan. She could no longer say that what happened

outside the American Continent was no concern of hers. American dollars were invested all over the world. The people who owned that money were naturally interested in what happened in the countries where it was invested. This was another thing that made it difficult for America to remain isolated. It was not so before the war of 1914–18. Until 1914, as we have seen in Chapter 8, America was a debtor country, having borrowed large sums in Europe in order to get her industries going. But America lent so much money during that war that she became a creditor country. This helped to draw America out of her isolation and into the war in 1917; for most of the money had been lent to Britain and her Allies, with whom her sympathies lay. If they were to lose the war there would be little hope of America getting any of the money back. As it was, she did not get very much of it. With her entry into the war American isolation broke down. The American President, Woodrow Wilson, wanted to break it down still further; for he wanted America to play a part in building a New World Order. He went to the Peace Conference at Versailles in 1919, and he did more than anyone else to found the League of Nations. But when he got home he found that his country preferred to retreat into isolation. We have seen in Chapter 4 that all treaties have to have the consent of two-thirds of the Senate. When Wilson sent the treaty, with the Covenant of the League of Nations in it, to the Senate, over half the senators voted in favour of it, but the number did not reach two-thirds and so America did not join the League.

Many thought it had been a mistake for America to enter the war at all, and the country went back to her policy of isolation. Yet isolation was becoming more than ever impossible. More money was loaned abroad, much of it to Germany; and as American industry expanded America came to rely more and more on foreign countries for her raw materials. We have seen how important the East Indies and Malaya had become as America's chief source of rubber and tin.

After Hitler came to power in Germany in 1933, many people in America began to think that war might break out in Europe before long. They were determined that America should not be drawn into it. Congress passed Neutrality Acts to make illegal all things they thought might drive America into war. No money was to be loaned or arms supplied to countries at war, and American ships were not to sail into the war zones, where they might be sunk.

President Roosevelt and his Secretary of State, Mr. Cordell Hull, did not favour this kind of isolation. They knew it would not work. In the summer of 1939, when it looked to them as though war was certain, they tried to get Congress to alter the Neutrality Act as a warning to Hitler that if he went to war he could not rely on America's remaining neutral; but Congress would not alter it.

FROM CASH-AND-CARRY TO LEASE-LEND

When war did break out in 1939 Congress altered the Neutrality Act by passing the "Cash-and-Carry" Act. This said that countries at war could buy American supplies if they sent their own ships to fetch them and paid for them in cash. Many Americans then thought that their country was safely isolated from the war. But Hitler's victories of the spring and summer of 1940 suddenly made them realize that America herself might be in danger before long if Britain should be beaten.

In September, 1940, to strengthen America's defences and to help Britain at the same time, President Roosevelt handed over to Britain fifty destroyers and other war material in return for permission to build American bases on British territory. The bases stretched from Georgetown in the south (in British Guiana, on the mainland of South America) to Newfoundland in the north. American forces were sent to Greenland to stop Germany's using it in the future as a base for attacking America. Later, they occupied Iceland, only 900 miles away from Britain, and used their

fleet to patrol the route to Iceland. This was a great help to Britain in the Battle of the Atlantic.

Meanwhile Britain was running out of the dollars with which to buy American goods under the "Cash-and-Carry" Act. So the Lease-Lend Act was passed, giving the President power to send supplies to those countries whose survival he considered necessary for the defence of America. There was to be no "payment" for these goods in the ordinary sense. Instead, the President was authorized to accept whatever "consideration" he thought fit. America had become the Arsenal of Democracy.

Some people in Britain were impatient because America did not openly declare war on Germany. But the old deep-rooted idea of isolation could only be broken down slowly, and President Roosevelt knew this. So skilfully did he go to work that each time he took a step nearer to war, the majority of the people approved; and yet at any of those times a majority would have disapproved if he had asked for a direct declaration of war. When, on 31st October, 1941, an American destroyer, the *Reuben Jones*, was torpedoed while on convoy work off Iceland, it became clear to most people that America and Germany were at war in all but name, and only the most stubborn isolationists objected to sweeping away the last remnants of the Neutrality Act.

AMERICA AT WAR

On 7th December, 1941, Japan attacked the American base at Pearl Harbour, and so brought America into the war. Within a week Germany and Italy declared war on America, making it indeed World War II.

UNDERSTANDING AMERICA

American isolation ended, and with its passing it has become more than ever necessary for us to seek to know and understand our neighbours across the Atlantic. Already, in August, 1941, President Roosevelt and Mr. Churchill had met somewhere at sea and drawn up the Atlantic Charter.

This made it clear that the English-speaking people forth were going to work together to build a better world.

Thanks to modern inventions, America and Britain are more truly neighbours to-day than say France and Britain were 100 years ago. To-day one can get from London to New York by air in less time than it took then to go from London to Paris. In 1757 when Benjamin Franklin wanted to come to London from America, he had to wait three months for a ship, and then it was another three and a half months more before he reached London. True there was a war on then, but now, when there is another war on, it is possible to get up in the morning in America and go to bed the same night in England. Every day over the radio people speak from America to England and from England to America. In fact, if somebody is speaking in a hall in London and his speech is being relayed to America, American listeners seated by their radio sets hear him *before* the people who are seated at the back of the hall in which he is speaking. This is because wireless waves travel more quickly through the ether than sound waves travel through the air. Because there is to-day so much more contact between America and ourselves, it becomes all the more important that we should learn as much about each other as we can. At present Americans know much more about us than we know about them. They *do* study our history, but we have only just started to study theirs. For example, all American boys and girls, but very few British boys and girls, know of the war of 1812 between Britain and America. In British history that war seems of little account beside the war against Napoleon that was raging at the same time. It is given a much bigger place in American history. Most of that war was fought along the Canadian border, but what the Americans remember most is that a British force sailed up the Potomac River to Washington and set fire to the Capitol and the house of the President. That house is to-day called the White House because it was painted white to cover up the scars of the fire.

The fact that we and the Americans speak the same language may make it seem that we are more nearly alike than we really are. It may make us forget that the Americans are not all descended from Britons who have crossed the ocean. Probably as many as two-thirds of the Americans are descended from people who went to America from other countries than our own. Besides that, America has developed habits and traditions of her own.

Although we speak the same language, many of the words we use have different meanings. Here are some examples. If you asked at an American filling station for petrol, they would not know what to give you; they call it gas or gasoline. If you asked for biscuits in a restaurant, they would bring you buns; if you want biscuits you must ask for crackers; and if you want sweets you must ask for candy. If you go into a shop and ask for suspenders you will get braces; and of course there you do not go to the pictures, but to the movies. On the roads, what we call a lorry they call a truck; what we call a goods truck on the railways they call a freight-car. We go to the top of a building in a lift; they go up in an elevator. These little differences should serve as a warning to us. We shall have to know much more about each other before there can be real understanding.

Many English people seem to go to America with the idea that America is much the same as Britain only bigger. It is something of a shock to these people to find so many things in the American way of life different from their own; and instead of trying to understand the differences, they just decide that Americans are queer and have queer ways of doing things. Sometimes they make themselves rather unpopular with the Americans by saying such things as "Oh, we don't do it like that in England."

Actually it is this superior way of talking which so often makes the American people so annoyed with the English. They think we look on their country as just an off-shoot of the British Empire instead of as a vigorous independent

country with a civilization of its own. Their country is certainly young compared with our own, but it has come of age. American people naturally hate to be looked on by people from the older country as though they belonged to a nation which has never quite grown up.

Of course, the best way to get to understand the American people is to visit their country and get to know them at home; unfortunately it costs a lot of money to go to America but it is well worth saving up for as an exciting adventure. If, however, you do get the chance, the best way to make the most of the visit is to treat it as a voyage of discovery, expecting to find in the American way of life all kinds of things that are quite different from our own.

AMERICAN BOOKS

If you cannot go to America you can at least find out a great deal about the country by reading about it, especially by reading the books that American people read, their novels and poems as well as their history and geography.

Some of the books American boys and girls read are also widely read in this country; for example, *Tom Sawyer* and *Huckleberry Finn* by Mark Twain, *Uncle Tom's Cabin* by Harriet Beecher Stowe, Fennimore Cooper's books about the Red Indians such as *The Last of the Mohicans* and *The Deerslayer*, Booth Tarkington's "Penrod" stories, Jack London's tales of adventure, and Zane Grey's books about the Wild West. There is also that poem about the Red Indians that everybody knows, *Hiawatha*, by the American poet Longfellow.

For older readers there are also many first class books by American writers that help us to understand American life past and present. Two recent ones which have been best-sellers in this country are *Gone with the Wind* by Margaret Mitchell, a very exciting novel of the Civil War period; and *Grapes of Wrath* by John Steinbeck, a book about the flight from the Dust Bowl (there are quotations from it in Chapter 6).

A narrative poem called *The White Cliffs*, written by Alice Duer Miller in 1940, should be read by everyone who hopes to see America and Britain drawn more closely together. It is a study of the English by an American woman who married an Englishman and lost him in the last war. As the writer of its preface says, "It should be read in this country not only for the pleasure it will give, but because it helps us to see ourselves as a friendly American sees us."

Other famous American writers whose books will be found on the shelves of many public libraries are Nathaniel Hawthorne, Edgar Allan Poe (one of the first great writers of mystery stories), Bret Harte, Winston Churchill (no relation to our Winston Churchill), Theodore Dreiser, Frank Norris, Sherwood Anderson, Sinclair Lewis, Upton Sinclair, Willa Cather, O. Henry, Thornton Wilder.

Book List

- U.S.A.* D. W. Brogan (O.U.P., 1941).
The American Political Scene. F. O. Darvall (Nelson, 1939).
"We, The People." Leo Huberman (Gollancz, 1940).
The Growth of the American Republic. S. E. Morison and H. S. Commager (O.U.P., 1937). 2 Vols.
The Making of American Civilization. C. and M. Beard (Macmillan, 1937).
History of the United States. Cecil Chesterton. Edited by D. W. Brogan (Dent, Everyman's Library, 1940).
Who are the Americans? W. Dwight Whitney (Eyre & Spottiswoode, 1941).
America's Economic Strength. C. J. Hitch (O.U.P., 1941).
Latin America. R. A. Humphreys (Royal Inst. International Affairs, 1941).
American Foreign Policy. D. W. Brogan (Oxford World Affairs Pamphlets, 1941).
The Panama Canal. J. Saxon Mills (Nelson, 1913).
Abraham Lincoln. D. W. Brogan (Hutchinson, 1931. Duckworth, 1935).

Abraham Lincoln—a play by John Drinkwater (Sidgwick and Jackson, 1938).

Only Yesterday (The Nineteen-twenties). F. L. Allen (Hamish Hamilton, 1931. Pelican Books, 1938).

Since Yesterday (The Nineteen-thirties). F. L. Allen (Hamish Hamilton, 1940).

America Comes of Age. André Siegfried (Cape, 1927).

The United States at Work. M. C. Martin and C. E. Cooper (Harrap, 1939).

The American Political System. D. W. Brogan (Hamish Hamilton, 1933).

South America. J. B. Trend (O.U.P., 1941).

America in World Affairs. Allan Nevins (O.U.P., 1941).

Men of America. Lionel Elvin (Pelican Books, 1942).

U.S.A. at Work and Play. Alicia Street (Cassell, 1942).

An Anglo-American Interpreter, A Vocabulary and Phrase Book. H. W. Horwill (O.U.P., 1939).

Some reference to American literature is made in the last chapter. Those who wish to make a more detailed study are recommended to read Morison and Commager (see above), Vol. II, pp. 278–288 and 543–550.

